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HISTORY
OF THE
IRISH PEOPLE



HISTORY
OF THE
IRISH PEOPLE.
JAMES S. REID

BY
W. A. O'CONOR, B.A.

VOLUME II.
THE PERIOD FROM 1829 TO THE LAND ACT OF 1881.

JOHN HEYWOOD,
DEANSGATE AND RIDGEFIELD, MANCHESTER;
AND 11, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS,
LONDON.
1887.



PREFACE.

As the Author has nowhere definitely expressed his views on Home Rule in this History, he gives the following letter from a dear and valued friend, with whom he has spoken and corresponded during several years on this and kindred subjects, as fairly representing his own opinions :—

August 17, 1886.

DEAR MR. O'CONOR,—Knowing, as you do, that the sad state of your native land has long engaged my anxious thoughts, it is the less wonderful to me that you request of me some expression concerning the present crisis. You must excuse abruptness and any appearance of undue confidence, else I might be unendurably lengthy.

If I were an Irishman, I believe that I should, as vehemently as your Nationalists, desire law to be under Irish control. Looking to the past, I cannot blame any Irishman for desiring a total separation from English rule. As an Englishman, I think entire separation better for us, as well as for you, than a *future like to the past*. Even from a military point of view, a disaffected Ireland is worse to us than if she were as independent as the United States. Yet if we consent to a wisely-tempered Home Rule, which does not involve a double Executive, this, I believe, will be better for us, and to Ireland both safer and better.

Not only so; but I fully believe that Ireland herself would very quickly so judge, if for a little moment she had full *freedom* (as Scotland had) *to refuse* legislative union. Scotland made her own terms with us: Ireland was conquered, and her annexation, whether less or more complete, was always compulsory. No wonder that our yoke has always been irksome. Suspected disaffection, even since 1829, has led to a treatment of Irish legislators widely different from that of Scottish. But all this would at once be changed if Ireland joined us by her own free act. Then her upper classes would reflect, what would Wellesley and Wellington have been, if Ireland had been separate from England; also, what proportion of the English high Executive have the Scots attained. In little communities like Holland, Belgium, or Greece, small is the range of action to an aristocracy, by the side of greater powers! Able and aspiring men would naturally desire a larger field. Next, the mass of the community would not be slow to understand that, if really separated from us, they could not avoid the great burden of military and naval defence; which in the present day, when armaments are costly in the extreme, could not be efficient without a taxation crippling to Ireland, stripped and peeled as she is. At least 50 years of rest and just laws and prosperity, and healing of religious enmities, are needed before Ireland could desire total isolation. I much regret that the bugbear of separation has been paraded in this argument.

To me it seems that, with a view to real conciliation, a frank public discussion of details is essential. Mr. Parnell having started the cry of "No Rent" in reply to a suspension of laws at once illogical and tyrannical, English landholders are alarmed, lest an Irish legislature would desire this crude extreme; and if it had control of the police, would effect it simply by forbidding evictions. Opinion may not be worth much; but my opinion is, that patriotic Irish landlords would not be hooded out of power, and would have adequate influence to prevent any act of sweeping injustice; and that local tribunals, such as Home Rule would originate and sustain, would carefully discriminate between rent which had been arbitrarily raised, especially by agents of absentees, and the rent of honourable and just landlords. An English Parliament, by the fallacy of striking *an average*, is almost certain to do injustice to humane

landlords, and yield wrongful advantage to the worst class of commercial grabbers. Again, it is feared lest, with a view to raise native industries, English manufactures be heavily taxed, as in some of our colonies. Certainly we should deserve this, and ought to take our chance of such retaliation, and allow the battle to be fought out in Ireland. But I understand these are just the matters which, with taxation, Mr. Gladstone's proposed measure carefully *withdrew from Irish control*. Therefore his scheme seems to me deceptive and certain to disappoint. No living man is competent to engage that an Irish parliament, once established, will not presently avow, with Grattan, that no power outside of Ireland, except the personal sovereign of England, has a right to any control over Irish law; and if the Irish parliament think it wiser to temporise, and not assert the principle too quickly, it seems to me certain that they will in their hearts foster it, and resent the English doctrine which makes them *subordinate* to our organs. They, like Grattan, will see the Queen or King as their sole superior, out of which a new growth of royal power may ensue. For English interests, *I greatly prefer that Ireland be separated from us entirely*. I regard it as certain that an Irish parliament will insist (and perhaps it ought to insist) that the Irish executive shall be responsible to it, as is the Canadian Executive to the Canadian Parliament; and if we expect it to give us soldiers and sailors, and contribute to the expense of our wars, we must calculate that they will claim a voice in our *foreign policy*. While I should rejoice in anything that checks us in aggressive war, I am not able to desire two Foreign Offices.

Therefore with me Home Rule does not mean *a single legislature* in Ireland, nor an ejecting of Irish representatives from our Westminster Parliament, but *such* Home Rule as for a quarter of a century I have maintained to be urgently needed in England, Wales, and Scotland. We *all* need provincial legislatures, subordinate to our Parliament, yet not yielding any omnipotence to a parliamentary veto. The business of Parliament has long been mischievously vast; even for British interests our first need is that its domestic action be limited to a minimum. In the American Union the matters which concern the whole Union are named, and the competence of Congress is confined to them. Something like this is needed by Great Britain, and the establishment of it, alike in this island and in Ireland, would give to us all a legitimate, limited, and beneficial Home Rule. The state of Ireland is widely different morally now and a century ago. The suppression of Grattan's Parliament I lament and condemn, but we cannot replace things just as they were, and in the effort to heal old wounds we must sedulously avoid to tear open new ones.

I am, faithfully yours,

F. W. NEWMAN.

For any errors of style or arrangement in the closing part of this volume, the Author pleads sudden and disabling illness. For the statements of facts and principles he makes no apology.

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HISTORY OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.

CHAPTER XVI.

REPEAL OF THE UNION.

SECTION I.

THE composition of cotemporary history is objected to on the ground that it is necessarily concerned with the persons and passions of the hour, and endangers the sacredness of truth by exposing it to the bias of faction. The historian is supposed to be safest from disturbing influences when he contemplates and describes the silent ruins of the past, and tells of actors whose names stand only for extinct policies. It might as reasonably be said that a boat should always remain in the open sea, to avoid exposure to the surf of the shore. The present is the landing-stage of history. Can it be seriously maintained that the writer who has been seeking wisdom from the world's records should always loiter on the outskirts of the living stage, and enter on the deserted field only when the combat is raging ahead? Must the garnered fruit of experience come in the shape of abstractions which busy men cannot apply, and the dead past stand always on a side-landing, and never link itself on to the moving train? The objection can only apply to detached accounts of the present, animated by its blind spirit and assuming ephemeral standards. The continuation of remote memorials down to our own day is necessary for the comprehension of the scenes that are enacted before us, and in which we more or less take part.¹ As politicians, we can know what we are only by seeing the hole of the pit whence we were digged. The world has gone on more by power of hate than of love, and continues to do so because men take no note of the fact. The conflicts of to-day are waged by ancient rivalries, and the value of principles is in danger of being forgotten in the hatreds of men. It is the historian's part to bring down the leading influences that move our people from the obscurity and barbarism of the past into the light of the day, and recognise them in actual operation. Then looking around us, we shall see opposing armies of men swept away by forces in whose grasp they are helpless, and in a sense blameless. Their shouts and their war cries are part of the storm that bears them on. We may learn to love our enemies even while we resist the power that dashes them against us. Tyranny is strong and impetuous and full of hate, and hurries on the wills of

¹ The popular conception of history is illustrated in an expression just uttered in the House of Lords: "It is a matter of history, and has no bearing on the present."—Lord Salisbury's Speech, August 19th, 1886.

men, while the active love of liberty is the triumph of man's higher nature over his indolence. Charity is the companion of progress, but the charity that will not survey the offence mistrusts its ability to forgive.

The history of Ireland is that of a people struggling to save themselves from extinction. It is publicly argued and taught that the land is not fit to produce corn and support a population, but is designed by nature to breed cattle for the food of another nation. The people of Ireland have been expelled from their homes, and driven from their country, with a persistence and on a scale that the world never before witnessed. Three millions of her population have been exterminated under our eyes. It is publicly proclaimed as part of the policy of the present Government that evictions are to be carried out on a large scale.¹ But no one seems to understand the true meaning of these facts. We understand it when we bring down the record from distant centuries that Norman England ignored the existence of a native Irish population, and at last recognised it only to destroy it by fire and famine and sword and homelessness. We catch its real import from knowledge of the fact that when the Irish population was largely replaced by English colonies, the same policy was recommenced with more concentrated purpose. Ireland has been, and is, fighting for her very life. She must be judged accordingly. And in striving to save her life she is struggling against the malign tendency that is destroying the best national life of England. The traveller who stands on the Rigi, in Switzerland, is apt, as he surveys the mingled loveliness and sublimity of mountain, plain, and lake, to take no note of the clustering embowered villages that extend as far as eye can reach, and the closely-strewn chalets that fill every valley and climb the loftiest steepes, telling of human health and happiness and family love, and earth and air turned to the ends for which God designed them. If he stands on the height behind Carnarvon, in Wales, he will see similar evidence of an industrious, a religious, and a happy people. No such sight will greet him in large portions of England and Scotland. He may travel miles and not see a human dwelling. He will see palatial suburbs, and legions of menials and paupers, the dishevelled fringe of the golden band; but an autochthonous people, sprung from the soil and living on the soil, a people wrought into the woof and web of the national fabric, he will see only in fragments of vanishing survivals. A ring of dependencies, a hollow bubble of colonies which one rude touch of adverse fortune may shiver into mist, is what imperialism is endeavouring to make of the United Kingdom, and what Ireland is struggling to hinder, and save thereby Great Britain and herself.

The people of Ireland who are thus fighting for their existence against a common danger are not a distinct race. They are composed of the ancient British element, colonies of Scandinavian origin, and Saxons. There is no ingredient of population in Ireland that is not represented in nearly the same proportions in England. The division into Celts and Saxons is wholly imaginary. There are men of French and other foreign extractions in both islands, but they are generally ranged on the side of privilege, and are often found to be the chief

¹ *Standard newspaper*, August 17th, 1886.

fomenters of interinsular hate. The religious animosities of Ireland are the continuance of secular passions that began when the country had only one creed. One other truth we have to bring from the past into the contests of to-day. The extinction of Ireland has always been aimed at in the name of law. To comprehend the laws of the present time we must class them with the laws of the past, for they have the same end. Those laws are the incrustations of violence, and are built on violated contracts and treaties. The cardinal complaint against Ireland resolves itself into the charge that she is instinctively striving to anticipate her sole means of safety, and to organise a provisional government of self-preservation that may frustrate the government of destruction, and that she accepts the aid of her exiled colonies.¹

The characteristic of man, and the indispensable condition of moral progress, is discontent and aspiration, arising from the sight or suffering of injustice. By the touch of the Creator's hand we pant for that pure upper air of justice which is the spirit of God. Human government was not commissioned to limit this tendency, or to decide with what concessions of freedom, religious or social, humanity is to work out its salvation. To say to a community, We grant you this or that privilege, and with it you must be satisfied, is to cut off that community from the human family as God ordained it. The charges of ingratitude or violated compact urged against struggling multitudes when they seek further breathing room are blasphemies against Heaven.

SECTION II.

The removal of the disabilities of Roman Catholics in 1829 took away a weight that balanced certain privileges which they enjoyed. The removal of the weight, and the violent subsidence of the other scale, almost threw the beam from its stand. Politically, the Irish Roman Catholics had been slaves, and enjoyed some of the protection of slaves. The landlords protected them in their small holdings, because their votes as well as their labours were theirs. But when the Emancipation Act passed, it was accompanied by the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders, lest they should vote for Parliamentary candidates of their own persuasion. The landlords then broke the old leases where they could, refused to make new ones, evicted the tenants, and consolidated the farms. Tenancy-at-will became the rule, with its attendant power of robbing and torturing the tenant by raising his rent

¹ "The Irish have been oppressed with bad laws, administered with shameless partiality. Resistance to the exaction of tithes was sure to lead to conviction and severe punishment; while the savage policeman, who visited the offence of a riot caused by his own conduct, in converting orderly and merely passive resistance into a tumult, was sure of acquittal. Law has been administered in Ireland in so scandalous a manner, that it has become odious in the eyes of the people. The consequence has been that a sort of barbarous law has grown up, and been administered with unhesitating ferocity towards all by whom the peasants think themselves wronged. They scruple not to assassinate the new tenant by whom their sickly wives and famished little ones are ejected from their farm, rather than see them die of starvation. The conviction of a friend, guilty only of rather a rough resistance to an oppressive impost for a church held in abhorrence, is often prevented by threatening denunciation; sometimes punished by death. All this is criminal, we admit. But this state of things is very different from that state of universal insecurity of life and property which the friends of coercion would have the public believe exists in Ireland. A wild and barbarous system of natural law prevails in Ireland. Still it is a system. People know what to expect, and may be safe from robbery or murder if they choose to conform to the savage system of laws to which they perfectly understand that they are amenable."—"Tait's Edinburgh Magazine," vol. ii, p. 838, 1832-3.

in proportion to his parsimony and his toil. On the other hand, office, with its dignities and its emoluments, was opened to Roman Catholics of the higher class, and the possibilities thus created detached them from their co-religionists and their country. O'Connell's extraordinary powers would have preserved him from the motives and apprehensions that turn average place-holders into deserters. He alone could have held promotion and remained the avowed champion of his country. In 1830 the majority of Lord Grey's Government wished to confer office on him, but they were dissuaded by Lord Lansdowne and the Duke of Richmond.¹ Giving O'Connell a position among the rulers of the country would have reconciled Ireland to the Union, and might have been the avoidance of a thousand crimes. He saw that his country's hope lay in either making the Union a reality or repealing it. His first speech was made against the Union in 1800. When the Orange Corporation of Dublin saw their city falling into decay, in 1810, they petitioned Parliament for a repeal of the Union. The High Sheriff also called a meeting to adopt a petition on the same subject. O'Connell spoke at it. His life with regard to Ireland was passed in urging on England either an equal Union or a Parliament in Ireland. He now established a Society of the Friends of Ireland, which was a continued form of the Catholic Association with a new object. English politicians, estimating the concession of emancipation by the magnitude of the sacrifice it involved of English prejudice, forgot that, in all but recognition of a principle, it brought increased suffering on the people of Ireland, and denounced O'Connell's conduct as rank ingratitude. The new society was suppressed, and it was at once succeeded by the Anti-Union Association. A grand demonstration of the trades of Dublin was prepared to support O'Connell, but Lord Anglesey, the Viceroy, who initiated Post Office *espionage* in Ireland, proclaimed it. The Irish Volunteers for the Repeal of the Union was the next name under which the anti-Union organisation appeared. It also was proclaimed, but O'Connell, relying on its legality, refused to submit, and was arrested with some of his friends, and required to give bail. He knew that it was hopeless to go before a jury, and allowed judgment to go by default. Before he was called up for sentence the feuds of faction were forgotten in the imperial requirements of reform, and O'Connell, instead of being sent to prison, was summoned to London as the champion of freedom. He cordially supported the Reform Bill, and indeed may be said to have furnished the means of carrying it against a majority of English members.² The Irish representation in Parliament was raised from 100 to 105. The county franchise was fixed at £20.

SECTION III.

The land tenure is the root-grievance of Ireland. Tithes were its offshoot; like rent, an ever-increasing tax on the industry of the peasant; with the double exasperation that no equivalent was received, and that they went to strengthen the Church in whose name he was

¹ "Greville's Memoirs," part ii., vol. i., p. 10.

² "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. ii., p. 154.

oppressed, and whose emissaries were at that moment declaring him to be an idolator. The exemption of pasture lands from tithes had been won in a Protestant Parliament by the remonstrances of the large graziers, who were Protestants. In Ulster potatoes and flax were freed from tithes by the decision of the Protestant law courts. In the southern and Catholic parts of the country neither Parliamentary nor legal relief was possible. The whole burthen of tithes and Church rates fell on the food of the people, and the opposition that arose became a struggle to live. While their religion was the crime of their race there was a show of consistency in their servitude, but the curse had been effaced from their creed, and yet the servitude remained. They were declared by law to be capable of holding high offices, and the eye of the landlord and Protestant clergyman watched their labours, and left them just enough of the produce to enable them to live and labour on. Men will endure almost any amount and continuance of regular level oppression. It needs some wanton aggravation, or venomous insult, to provoke them to open opposition. In 1831, a member of a New Reformation Society for the Conversion of Ireland, a curate in charge of a parish in the county of Carlow, made himself obnoxious by demanding tithe from the parish priest. This course was perfectly legal, but it brought the naked wrong of a Protestant Established Church in Ireland so closely under view that the ascendancy clergy usually refrained from taking it. The priest refused to pay, and his flock supported him and followed his example. The resistance to tithes became universal. Frequent battles were fought with the police and soldiery, in which the people generally succeeded, though at a heavy cost, in preventing the capture and sale of their cattle. At Newtownbarry twelve peasants were shot dead and twenty fatally wounded by the yeomanry. At Carrigshock eleven policemen were killed and seventeen wounded in a lengthened conflict with the people. Several other engagements took place, in which the peasantry suffered severely, but showed remarkable skill and determination. They fought with stones against firearms. They had only one object in view—to save their children's food from the nominees of a hateful Church. For this they deliberately gave their lives. The land war went on at the same time, and was conducted in the same spirit of self-devotion. Landlords and agents were shot, and their slayers went to the scaffold as other men might storm the breach in some deadly encounter. In the courthouse of each assize town a striking scene might periodically be witnessed. The day closes, and the crowded building is dimly lighted by candles that only show spots of illumination wrapt in surrounding mysterious gloom. A silence that partakes of the mystery and the darkness reigns. After an interval of agonising suspense, the jury enter and pronounce their verdict of guilty. The judge takes the black cap that lies by his side and places it on his head. He commences his sentence of death. At the same moment arises the wild heart-piercing cry of the mother, sister, or wife of the prisoner from outside the courthouse, to whom the fatal news has been communicated. The tones of the judge's voice, and the mournful wail of his loved ones, every accent of which he knows well, mingle in the ears of the condemned man, usually a young, straight, powerful peasant in

the spring of his life. He confronts the judge, and listens with steady, unquailing gaze; and when the sentence is pronounced, he turns, silent and erect, and goes to his doom.

SECTION IV.

Whatever be the guilt or heroism of their crimes against tyranny, Ireland claims no monopoly in them. Her sister, England, was sealing her fealty to freedom with the same signature of blood. In 1831, when the Reform Bill was thrown out by the Peers, Lord Malmesbury and his wife escaped death almost by a miracle at the hands of a party who had resolved to kill the first peer that passed, and to take the consequences. Archbishop Whately, in the same year, had a similar escape in Birmingham.¹ The country was in a state of actual rebellion, and numberless local risings were put down by the resident gentry. These occurrences were so common that no inquests were held on the bodies of the slain. The Duke of Wellington, speaking of the riots at Birmingham, declared that he had been present at the sacking of many towns, but had never seen any town treated like Birmingham.² Lord Campbell, in 1832, says that anything like Queen's Square in Bristol he never saw except Valenciennes after it had been bombarded and taken by storm.³ When Bellingham shot Mr. Percival, he was very nearly rescued by the crowd, and he was hanged amid cries of "God bless you, Bellingham."⁴ Yet so completely did the old blind hatred, which it had taken centuries to inculcate, possess the souls of both nations, that while the rioters were fighting for their common liberty, their leaders felt as if they were fighting against each other. The common notion that prevailed among Liberals in England was, that Ireland was wholly incapable of laws or liberty, and must be governed by the sword; and O'Connell was execrated by Whigs and Tories as the encourager of riot, because he exposed the carelessness of the police in some of their engagements with the people.⁵

SECTION V.

A general election took place in 1833. O'Connell went to the country with the cry of "Repeal, and No Tithes." Forty-five Repealers were returned, and eighty-two members opposed to tithes. The great body of Irish Protestant laymen had as little faith in the Established Church as in repeal. Stanley, whose removal from the Chief Secretaryship was universally desired, and who had lately declared in Lancashire that he would resist repeal to the death, succeeded in forcing a Coercion Bill on the Ministry, as a primary measure, contrary to the advice of the Viceroy, Lord Anglesey. In the King's Speech coercion was recommended, repeal was denounced, and attention was called to the question of tithes. O'Connell moved an amendment to the Address. He showed how the Catholic Relief Act had brought no relief, and asked the Chief Secretary whether the grievance of the Established Church was to be redressed.

¹ "Life of Whately," vol. i., p. 114.

² "Memoirs of the Earl of Malmesbury," vol. i., pp. 37-40, 104.

³ "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. ii., p. 3.

⁴ Doubleday's "Life of Peel," vol. i., p. 86.

⁵ "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. ii., p. 7.

Mr. Stanley replied contemptuously that it was idle to talk of concession until the disturbances that disgraced the country, and for which Mr. O'Connell was so largely accountable, were put down. Colonel Davies, member for Worcester, declared that the Chief Secretary's speech was in every sense an insult to the people of Ireland, and proved, in every phrase, how totally unfit he was for an office which afforded so many opportunities of endangering the peace of the empire. Enthroned in a fancied aristocratic superiority, he seemed to think it was quite beneath his reputation to hold out the olive branch to Ireland. Mr. Roebuck said that the right hon. gentleman seemed to play with men as if they were so many puppets, and not human beings, like himself, of strong feelings, passions, and high emotions. Let him for the first time try the effects of those exploded virtues, honesty and justice. Another member said that he had done nothing for the peace of Ireland, and everything for her danger. The right honourable gentleman, a fourth said, had often many ungracious things to do, but it so happened that he possessed a singular facility of doing them in the most ungracious manner. A fifth declared that the Chief Secretary was the real agitator, the arch-Repealer. The address, through Peel's support, was carried by a very large majority. On the 12th of February leave was given to bring in a bill abolishing Church rates, reducing the archbishoprics from four to two, and the bishoprics from twenty-two to twelve, and appropriating the amount thus saved to State purposes. O'Connell expressed his great satisfaction and delight. Peace seemed at hand. A Coercion Bill that gave the Viceroy power to suppress all meetings, and substituted court-martial for trial by jury, was then hurried through the House of Lords. Lord Althorp proposed its adoption in the Commons in a half-hearted way that only whetted the impatience of his party.¹ They were like men craving for stimulants. Mr. Stanley satisfied them to intoxication. The matter to be dealt with was the grievance, irritating and oppressive, under which the country groaned and writhed, and sometimes threatened and struck. Mr. Stanley confined himself to the threats and blows. He rang changes on some murder case, till his hearers were inflamed to madness. Schoolboys torturing some dumb creature do not think of the sufferings of their victim, but welcome its cries and struggles with exultation, as provocatives to combat. Such was the kind of contest in which Mr. Stanley engaged, and such the rapture of the strife which he won. Ireland was bound and tormented, but her chains and her torments must never be taken into account when her shouts and contortions are under consideration. These must be considered by themselves, and suppressed in themselves. The impotent outbreak and the agony that caused it must never be treated together. When a lesson in servile demeanour has been enforced, some badge of freedom is vouchsafed. This is the pleasure of governing to crude minds. Mr. Stanley ran a long career, during which great interests and critical situations were committed to his management. He possessed a flow of bitter rhetoric, which, coming from the elevation of his ancient title and great possessions, had the sound of a cataract. But in jubilant malice towards those whom he causelessly despised, and held in his power, he never ceased to

¹ "Earl Russell's Recoll. and Sugg.," p. 112.

be a boy. An unjust law gives a great advantage to its supporters in the nature of the resistance which it provokes. Widespread as the pressure of the atmosphere, it crushes its mass of victims to undistinguishable death. The solitary protecting limb that aims a convulsive blow justifies rage, and furnishes matter for declamation.

The pride of man triumphed, and the bill became law in April. The Church Reform Bill, after a lengthened delay, was then carried through the House of Commons, but was shorn of the single clause that gave it the semblance of justice. The sum of money accruing from the suppressed sees, estimated at three millions, was reserved for strictly ecclesiastical purposes. This alteration was made on the proposal of Mr. Stanley. Another change was made in the House of Lords. One of the clauses provided that no appointment should be made to a benefice in which no duty had been done for the three previous years. The notion of judging a church by its usefulness gave offence. It was insisted that the suspension should not take place without the consent of the diocesan, and that the revenues of the suspended benefice should be allowed to accumulate for the purpose of building a church or glebe-house within the parish—a parish without Protestants. The Ministry, rather than wreck the bill and themselves, received this amendment. No good was accomplished by the Church Temporalities Bill, save that it refuted the supposed inviolability of the Establishment. The abolished Church rate was added to the landlord's rent, and made him the representative of an unjust demand. Such was the remedy, heralded by coercion, that was to extinguish Irish discontent—a Church bill that secured the possession of the vineyard to husbandmen who returned no fruits. The Act of Emancipation, after four years, had not given to the natives a single Catholic judge, stipendiary magistrate, or police inspector. Stanley was removed to the Colonial Office. His victory made his longer tenure of the Chief Secretaryship impossible. He was succeeded by Hobhouse, who soon resigned.

SECTION VI.

The National system of education made its appearance about this time. The first object of public instruction by the Irish Parliament had been the preservation of the English language. This purpose so far failed that, in the reign of Elizabeth, an act was passed providing for the celebration of religious services in Latin wherever English was not known. After the Reformation the main design became the making of proselytes to Protestantism. The spirit of one or both of those two purposes has been imported into, and characterises to the present day, the system introduced by Mr. Stanley with a different intention in 1831. Its design was to substitute for the old proselyting establishments (the Kildare Society and the Society for Discountenancing Vice) a mixed method, in which the schools should be open to Catholics and Protestants, four days in the week devoted to moral and literary, and one or two days to separate religious instruction, and the religious belief of the children was in no way to be interfered with. The Catholics warmly approved; the Protestants much more warmly protested. It was proposed that

books for instruction in both religions should be supplied at first cost. The Protestants objected to the dissemination of Roman Catholic books at the public expense. They carried their point in this and several other particulars. They subsequently removed from the reading books every mention of Irish nationality, and even such extracts from Scott and Campbell as contained allusions to love of country and liberty; but allowed to remain a song in which each Irish boy and girl was practised to thank God for being born a happy English child. In a poem to this effect, "English" might represent the United Kingdom if accompanied by others recognising Irish nationality; but when the latter was carefully rejected, the word was only a negative one. The Roman Catholics now opposed, and the struggle has ended in rendering the system practically denominational.

SECTION VII.

In 1834 O'Connell brought his proposal on the subject of the Union before the House of Commons. It had been an incident of much remark that just when the Act of Emancipation was passed, on the very day when the King attached his signature to it, the sword brandished in the hand of the statue of the Protestant champion Walker, standing on a lofty column on the walls of Derry, fell with a crash, and was broken to fragments. The introduction of O'Connell's remedial measure was signalled in the minds of some of his friends by a similar omen. "The mournful tones of the death-bell, the mercenary indications of parochial regret, were sounding at intervals from the steeple of St. Margaret's Church, as we passed by on our way to the House of Commons on the evening of the 22nd of April, the time appointed by Mr. O'Connell for his proposition of a repeal of the Legislative Union; and we felt a kind of cheering presentiment conveyed to us with each clang of the death-knell, so totally disassociated with the idea of mortality which they were intended to convey, that we involuntarily exclaimed, as we entered the precincts of imperial legislation, 'That is the knell of the ill-starred Union! from this night its decline will commence, and its dissolution will be as certain as that of the nameless being whose decease is now sought to be communicated by these dismal sounds.'"¹

In discussions on Irish affairs Irishmen naturally dwell on their wrongs, while Englishmen are apt to break forth into anger at the audacious disloyalty of the individual who exposes them, and would raise a question against their country's honour. No man, English or Irish, had ever given himself with higher motives to a great cause than those which led O'Connell to the furtherance of British reform. The outcome of that movement in the recent proffer to his country, by the party of reform, of the object to which he had given his life, is the natural justice of history. On that topic he thought and spoke with the calmness of his statesmanlike qualities. In Ireland he was engaged in warfare against unscrupulous foes under overwhelming legal disadvantages. He was like a prisoner endeavouring to pick the lock of his cell, and storming at the same moment against the mean tyranny that allowed no more dignified exit. He used subterfuges of law

¹ Huish's "Life of O'Connell."

while thundering at the gate of the constitution. It was the fortune of his period and of his large intellect that he toiled at one and the same time amid the clouds and whirlwind that deformed the mountain's base and the comparatively serene sunshine that crowned its summit. The service he did to English freedom has since been allowed, and was then fresh in men's minds. He was a leader in every movement that we find pride and repose in now. He was almost the first in the agitation for repeal of the corn laws. He was one of the first in seeking and gaining the penny postage system.¹ In personal character he was at least equal to the best man his enemies could produce. In genius he towered above them all. No man approached him in ability in the House of Commons. Notwithstanding all this, or because of it, Englishmen even of the highest rank could not speak of, or allude to him, in decent language. Peel calls him a "blackguard" in one of his letters.² "O'Connell made a most blackguard speech," Greville wrote.³ He was called a "blackguard" in the House of Commons. Lord Ellenborough wrote of him: "O'Connell spoke like a blackguard."⁴ "There is O'Connell! God damn the scoundrel," said King George IV., when he presented himself at the great levée, after the Emancipation Bill passed.⁵ A distinguished soldier, meeting an old acquaintance, was asked by him where he came from. The answer was, "I have just come from O'Connell." "Did you shake hands with him?" was the next inquiry. "Yes." "With which hand?" "With my right." "Then shake my hand with your left," was the rejoinder.⁶ Men of the greatest refinement and virtue cannot, without injury to themselves, possess a region in which they are free from the obligations of decency and honour. To many Englishmen, Ireland is still beyond the pale. Much more deplorable are the shallow judgments of modern writers of O'Connell's own country, creed, and politics, who slight and condemn his struggle for repeal, and pronounce it a detraction from the glory of his Emancipation victory. They were actually borne along, though they knew it not, by the tide he had set flowing. A subterranean convulsion a few years since displaced a vast wave at one end of the Pacific. Its presence was never felt until it broke on the shore at the other extremity. The mighty undulation, of cosmic size and movement, had passed unnoticed along the whole length of the vast ocean. Ships, raised on its globe-like height, had been aware of the puny billows that beat against their sides. Such has been the operation of O'Connell's agitation. All the battles and commotions of the last forty years were only surface waves on the great movement initiated. The impetus of his heaving genius was on so vast a scale that men were unaware of it, as they are of the motion of the earth. Now, when the wave strikes on the shore of legislative success, we see that he alone of Irishmen made possible.

¹ "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. II., 107.

² "Memoirs of Sir R. Peel," part I., p. 108.

³ "Memoirs," 2nd part, vol. I., p. 279.

⁴ "Lord Ellenborough's Diary," vol. I., p. 167.

⁵ O'Rourke's "Life of O'Connell," p. 112.

⁶ Hulah's "Life of O'Connell," p. 8.

SECTION VIII.

The House of Commons came together to listen to his arguments with deaf hearts, and to reject his proposals with instantaneous unanimity that scorned deliberation. He was quite conscious of the kind of opposition he was to meet. He began by exposing the false pride that inspired it. He told how members of the House had said to him, almost with oaths, that Ireland should never escape them. "Sir," he said, "I do believe it is a fact that this claimed superiority, this general notion of a right of dominion inherent in England over Ireland, has been the great bane of both countries, and the source of all the evil which you have for centuries inflicted upon Ireland. I do not believe there ever existed a greater mistake than the supposition that this country has a right of domination over Ireland. I ask those whom I address to give up the pride of power and dominion, which it is infinitely more difficult to part with than the minor interests involved in their possession." He knew that until this claim of absolute power over Ireland, which from the first had been described as an aberration of reason, was resisted and shamed, it was in vain to prove that Ireland was a sufferer from the Union. A slave does not argue with his owner that the relation between them tends solely to the profit of the one and the loss of the other. It is for that end that the relation was devised. He knew that in reply to his statement of the actual misery, the overwhelming distress, and great destitution consequent on the Union, returns would be quoted of imports and exports showing a greatly-increased productiveness, it being assumed that the right result of the Union was to leave an industrious and hard-working people destitute, in order to enrich their masters in England. The fact that Ireland was starving under the Union would be balanced by the other fact that shiploads of grain and live stock were daily passing to England from the starving country, if England had a right to the food of the starving Irish. Ireland's allotted part was not to feed her own children, but the children of another country. It was useless to complain of rack rents and absentees, so long as England claimed the right to enforce rack rents for the very purpose of enriching absentees. "My first and greatest anxiety, therefore," O'Connell said, "is to demonstrate that the English have no right of conquest, nor any title to the subjugation of Ireland. I mean distinctly to assert that Ireland was an independent nation, and we ought to regard her, not as a subordinate province, but as a limb of the empire, as another and distinct country, subject to the same king, but having a legislature totally independent of the Legislature of Great Britain. I shall be as brief," he added, "as I can upon this subject, for it is quite clear that no man ever yet rose to address a more unwilling audience. My first sentence was interrupted." It is incidental to England's peculiar claim that any attempt to modify the Union, the raising of any question about its legality or finality, is instantly looked at as aiming at total separation. The man who claims the right of a slaveowner always interprets the request for a modification of terms as an intention to run away. "The most serious charge of all," O'Connell said in his closing speech, "has been imparted to me by a

friend. It has been said that my acts tended, and from thence an inference was drawn that my disposition went, towards a separation of the two countries. I do not object to any gentleman canvassing my acts with a view to show their tendency to a separation. So far from objecting to that, I invite it. The instant that any man can show that such is the tendency of my acts, that instant I will alter such conduct. But if the charge be made directly against me as a fact, it is one of a traitorous tendency, and I have but one way of meeting it—proclaiming its utter falsehood. My conduct has been the reverse of this.” His proposal, which was merely for the appointment of a committee of inquiry, was rejected by 523 votes against 38. Fifty-seven Irish members voted in the majority. Mr. Spring Rice, who had undertaken to reply to O’Connell, after the rejection of the motion, moved an address to the Crown, expressing a determination to preserve the Union inviolate. This address was carried and agreed to at a conference of both Houses.

SECTION IX.

In February, Littleton, who succeeded Hobhouse as Chief Secretary, induced the Ministry to obtain from Parliament a loan of a million to be paid to the tithe-owners on the security of existing arrears. He followed this up by a bill commuting tithes to a land tax, which reached a second reading. On the 27th of May Mr. Ward moved a resolution pledging Parliament to re-appropriate the surplus revenues of the Church to State purposes. Lord Althorp, as a compromise, offered a commission of inquiry into the affairs of the Establishment. Mr. Stanley and several others left the Ministry. Ward’s motion was lost, and the House adopted the Commission. The King assured a deputation of Irish bishops of his resolution to defend the Church, and declared that his signature to the Commission pledged him to nothing. The Duke of Cumberland formally announced in the House of Lords that he never would consent to any alienation of Church property. Littleton, in order to gain O’Connell’s assent to the Tithes Bill, promised him that the harsher clauses of the Coercion Bill, which was to expire on the 1st of August, should be omitted, and Brougham wrote to the Viceroy, the Marquis of Wellesley, urging that course. On this, O’Connell withdrew a repeal candidate at an Irish election, and suppressed an anti-Ministerial address which he was about to issue to the ~~area~~ of England. On the 1st of July Lord Grey re-introduced the ~~in~~ all its rigour. O’Connell made known what had ~~en~~, Lord Althorp, and Lord Grey successively ~~bourne~~ became Prime Minister. A letter was ~~up~~ by two hundred and six Liberal members, ~~Jonnell~~, Hume, Grote, &c., promising their sup- ~~a~~ office. He consented, but stipulated that Little- ~~ld~~ be cancelled. The Coercion Bill was renewed ~~court-martial~~ clause being omitted. The Tories ~~Irish~~ peer declared that such inconsistency, ~~blushing~~ abandonment of principle were never ~~expressed~~ his deep regret, and Wellington endea-

voured to restore the omitted clause in the Lords, but did not succeed. On the 29th of July the Tithes Commutation Bill went into committee. It was not to come into operation for five years, in order to give time for collecting the arrears due on the advance made by Parliament to the clergy. O'Connell proposed to give up the arrears, and let the bill come into immediate operation. This amendment was carried, and the bill was read a third time. The Lords threw it out. Protestant Ireland went into an ecstasy. Lord Winchelsea was invited over, and instructed Orangemen how to applaud at meetings by the "Kentish fire." A great Orange gathering met at Hillsborough. Sixty thousand Orange yeoman marched in military style. "Before the Orangemen of Ulster," said the *Standard*, "O'Connell and his followers will not stand a week." "The Protestants of Ulster," said the *Times*, "constitute a tremendous military force, and will be able to defend themselves." No person thought of attacking the Protestants of Ulster. Their English friends always teach them to regard any constitutional measure that does not please them as an armed invasion. They were now triumphing over a popular defeat.

On the 14th of November Lord Althorp succeeded to the House of Lords as Lord Spencer, and the King took the occasion of dismissing the Melbourne Ministry. Peel became Prime Minister, the Earl of Haddington Viceroy, and Sir Henry Hardinge Chief Secretary.

On the 18th of December a large force of military and police proceeded to collect tithes to the value of forty shillings from a widow at Rathcormack. A desperate and long-contested fight took place, in which twelve peasants were killed. A thrill of varied emotions passed over the country; but the most significant fact, and that which left the deepest impression on all minds, was that the country people stood the fire and charge of the soldiery with indomitable determination. A general election took place, and the new Parliament met early in 1835. By O'Connell's aid a Whig Speaker, Abercromby, was elected. Sir H. Hardinge brought forward a Church Reform Bill almost identical with that rejected by the Lords. But the Whigs and Radicals were determined to drive Peel from office, and took combined action for that end. Lord J. Russell moved for a Committee of the whole House to consider the temporalities of the Irish Church, and proposed that the surplus revenues should be applied to some popular use. This motion passed, but not till two further resolutions affirming secular appropriation were carried did Peel resign.

Lord Melbourne received the King's command to form an administration. Rumours reached the Palace that O'Connell was to be appointed Irish Attorney-General.¹ The King's anger was uncontrollable. Melbourne assured him there was no such intention. The intolerance of O'Connell was by no means confined to the King. Lord Lansdowne afterwards stated that Mr. T. Grenville, with whom he was on intimate terms, wrote to him, saying he regretted he could no longer visit at his house, lest he should run the risk of meeting O'Connell. He ran no risk whatever of meeting O'Connell at Lord Lansdowne's. It appears, however, that Lord Mulgrave, the Viceroy, had led O'Connell to expect that he would

¹ "Life of Lord Melbourne," vol. II., p. 118.

be offered the Irish Attorney-Generalship, and that the Irish leader had already framed his policy and course of conduct in the discharge of that office. He had directed his son to find a suitable mansion where he might dispense the wide hospitality that would help to effect and demonstrate the effacement of religious feuds. He was fitted beyond all other men for the office of Attorney-General, and the duties he associated with it. The Ministry owed its existence to his honesty and influence. His power in Ireland was unexampled. He would lose the annual tribute which the people raised for him since he gave up his practice at the bar, and in 1834 it amounted to £13,000, and the Union would have gained the confidence of the people. Humiliation of the man was preferred to conciliation of the nation. When word was brought that he must waive his personal claims, or that the chance of forming a ministry must be abandoned, he did not conceal his disappointment. He owned that he had dwelt with satisfaction on the effects his assumption of office would produce. He had longed for the opportunity of proving to the Protestants of Ireland, by deeds and not by words, that he would do them justice. He now patiently, and to men's eyes cheerfully, submitted to his exclusion, and took his seat on the Ministerial side, where he continued for six years. In June, 1836, Lord Morpeth introduced a fresh bill commuting tithes to a rent charge, and containing the previous appropriation clause. It was read three times in the Commons, and rejected by the Lords. In April the next year, Lord Morpeth again passed his bill through the Commons. The Lords rejected the appropriation clause. In May, for the fifth time, he brought it forward, without the appropriation clause, but with a proposal to impose a tax of ten per cent on the clergy for educational purposes. O'Connell acquiesced. The bill had reached a second reading, when the King died, and Queen Victoria ascended the throne. The new Parliament met February 21st, 1838. Government declared themselves content to introduce a bill for the mere conversion of tithes to a rent charge. O'Connell assented, and proposed that the arrears then due should be remitted by applying the million loan to their discharge, thus making it a gift to the clergy. This was agreed to. So the Tithes Commutation Bill became law.

SECTION X.

For the present nothing was gained, but much was lost to the national cause, by the Tithes Commutation Act. The Protestant Church was no longer allowed or compelled to collect its tithes from a Catholic people. Herein was acknowledged the injustice of such an impost. But the collection was continued in a new and unassailable form. The thing that was admitted to be wrong was enthroned by the side of rent. If tithes had been wholly abolished, their amount would have been added to the landlord's receipts. Unless we extricate ourselves from the entanglements and absorbing interests of the special contest, unless we keep ourselves aware that the result of the long conflict may be a present loss, and can only turn out to be a gain in the distant sum of events, we shall never understand Irish history, or any history. O'Connell is reported to have

said that by throwing the burthen of the Church on the landlords its final overthrow was ensured. There is much apparent truth in the cruel taunt that is always reiterated about a people agitating for redress, that they do not know what they seek, and that they hold erroneous notions concerning the particular object for which they are sacrificing their peace. Through the reform struggle most of the Scotch members took the hostile side. One of their favourite topics was the unfitness of the people of Scotland for the elective franchise. Sir William Rae told the House of Commons that his countrymen could never be trusted with popular election, because they could never assemble without bloodshed. Sir Charles Forbes testified that they were so ignorant that they neither knew what reform nor what representation meant; and a noble duke asserted in the Lords that the people of Scotland were only interested in reform because they thought it would give them "free whisky."¹ Lord Malmesbury tells us that the English lower classes were similarly ignorant and deluded; that they were convinced that the Reform Bill would alter their whole condition; that servants left their places, feeling sure they need never serve again; and that marriages were put off until the redemption of the poor from poverty was effected.² The tithe and repeal contests in Ireland were constantly assailed with charges of this kind. The people could gain nothing by the abolition of tithes; they did not know what repeal meant. Those shallow mockings are founded on the assumption that human progress must be the result of provident self-interest. If we desire to purify and elevate our conceptions of man, let us compare the lives and fortunes of any dozen individuals who have risen to power and influence through politics in our own times, with the fate of the multitudes who have borne the brunt and burthen of the fray. If the latter did not know what they were contending for, the former did. How far does their knowledge go to establish their superiority? We basely conclude that men do not know what they are seeking for unless they are fighting for some personal advantage; if they are merely labouring for fair play and justice and truth, we conclude it must be in ignorance. There is no more reassuring spectacle to any one who desires to profit by it, than the populations of England and Ireland giving themselves to toils and losses for triumphs which leave their condition almost unchanged. Their sorest discouragement is when they see men leaving their side for honours and preferments which are no gain to the cause, and cast a doubt on the purity of its motive. The Tithes Commutation Bill, without the appropriation clause, was, for the moment, victory to the Lords, security to the Church, surrender on the part of the Ministers, and ground of accusation against O'Connell. It was carried amid a tempest of passions. It was a war of words, and every word was a fulmination of explosive rage. The combatants have passed away, but the air is still heavy from the discharge of that baleful artillery, and the firmament still echoes the threats, the insults, the shouts of defiance, that characterised the combat. The host of Tory and Orange factions fought against one man. How great his strength and daring must have been appears not only from the greatness of the

¹ "Cockburn's Journal," vol. 1, p. 8.

² "Lord Malmesbury's Memoirs," vol. 1, p. 38.

multitude he withstood, but from the fact that so many struck at him without shame or compunction. Fear of him conquered the fear of the condemnation of future times. How had he offended? He was striving to unite a divided kingdom and to efface a crime, not by vengeance or reversal, but by restoring the victims to equality with those who did the wrong. Here are his words: "I want to unite together in one indissoluble bond, based upon the principle of equal rights and privileges, the people of England, Ireland, and Scotland." "I have considered repeal as a means to an end; that end I am now looking for by other means." That end was equal union, and he was now seeking to accomplish it by aiding the party that represented the Liberal hopes and instincts of England.

SECTION XI.

For accepting his aid the Ministry was reviled, and O'Connell was execrated in England, and suspected by some of his friends in Ireland. When Peel was Premier, in 1835, all the Liberal sections came together, and agreed to follow a common course of action. They met at the house of Lord Lichfield, and O'Connell promised his support. The alliance was therefore called the "Lichfield House compact," and as O'Connell was understood to be a party to it, common opinion assumed it to be an agreement between the Government and O'Connell. The people of Ireland were proud of their champion's achievement, and as Lord Mulgrave, the new Viceroy, was supposed to have negotiated the alliance, he was received in Ireland with enthusiastic welcome. This was the very end which a wise statesman would have aimed at. Thus the Union would be made valid. "The reconciliation of the Whigs with O'Connell was perfectly legitimate, as it amounted to no more than an understanding that in consideration of a Liberal policy towards Ireland he was to support them. The Tories had no right to taunt the Whigs with trying to please O'Connell, as they were eager at all times to co-operate not only with ultra-Radicals, but with Chartists."¹ "Compact there was none, but an alliance on honourable terms of mutual co-operation undoubtedly existed."² But what evil meaning is there in the words "Lichfield House compact," that their mere sound should contain a rebuke, an exposure, a deadly accusation? The words are harmless, but jealousy and hatred of O'Connell and Ireland gave them malevolent import. This simple fact explains what the Irish Union and representation in Parliament were intended and understood to be. It was never meant that the Irish members should have the rights of membership, or enter into the general transaction of business, or have any weight in the balance of parties. Curran had correctly calculated English expectations when he spoke of "fifteen or twenty Irish members, who might be found every session sleeping in their collars under the manger of the British Minister." But this could not be when O'Connell entered the House of Commons. He was the most powerful man there. The meaning of the Union with England, in its obvious and equitable sense, was that in the forming of

¹ "Life of Lord Campbell," vol. II., p. 156.

² "Earl Russell's Recollections and Suggestions," p. 135.

ministries, and framing of policies, and general transaction of government, ability and influence, wherever they came from, should take their level. The instant this claim was supposed to stand good in the case of Irishmen, the Tory faction burned with fury. They could not openly say that the Irish had no rights, and that their interference in Parliamentary government was an intolerable intrusion; but they knew that this sentiment would be understood, and they loaded the words "Lichfield House compact" with it, and so made them a bludgeon with which to brain their adversaries. It was O'Connell who, by his presence in Parliament, brought the true relations of England and Ireland into light. He claimed equal privileges for Irish members as for English, and if they were not granted he demanded the restoration of the Irish Parliament. It has been the careful policy of the Conservatives to keep the former alternative out of view. His claims for equality could not be refuted, because he was more than their equal in his own person; so all that remained was to crush and silence him. In 1837 an association was formed in London to raise subscriptions for the purpose of furthering petitions against Irish elections. A special effort was proposed for expelling O'Connell from Parliament. The danger of an undertaking of this kind lay in the notorious partiality of the election committees. On the 21st of February, 1838, at a dinner given to him at the Crown and Anchor, O'Connell spoke of the foul perjury committed in the Tory committees of the House of Commons. Lord Maidstone, the eldest son of Lord Winchelsea, brought this language before the House of Commons, and moved that it was a false and scandalous imputation on the honour of the House. Everyone knew that the imputation was literally true, and that it had been expressed by many other persons in still stronger language. Yet the motion that O'Connell should be reprimanded was carried by 226 to 197. The Conservatives came in crowds to see his humiliation. They merely blunted the edge of words of censure, as has since been done with terms of criminal condemnation. O'Connell made the occasion one for proving his statements. Six weeks after, a member who was unseated on petition wrote a letter to the *Morning Chronicle*, in which he said that the majority of the committee before whom his case came were the "most corrupt that ever degraded the administration of justice and the name of the Commons of England." The letter was brought before the House, and the Tories carried their proposal by so small a majority that the subject was not renewed. In this year, on the death of Baron Joy, the Mastership of the Rolls was offered to O'Connell. The post was held by O'Loughlen, who took it with the understanding that he might, at a future time, be expected to vacate it in O'Connell's favour. O'Connell now declined it, and there can be no doubt that his main objection was that he thought he could better serve the Liberal cause out of office.¹

SECTION XII.

A Poor-law and a Municipal Reform Bill, which had gone through their first stages in the preceding reign, were finally carried in the first year of Queen Victoria. The circumstances that made poor-laws neces-

¹ "Greville's Memoirs," part 2, vol 1, p. 101.

sary in England were sudden, revolutionary, and on a vast scale. The corresponding circumstances in Ireland were perennial, and were met as they arose by customs and alleviations of a spontaneous nature. In England poor-laws were enacted because the poor were deprived of their established sources of relief by the confiscation of monasteries, and the peasants were driven from their lands. In Ireland it was the landlord class whose lands generally had been taken from them, and the monasteries had not been the principal distributors of charity. When the extension of poor-laws to Ireland, therefore, was resolved on, it seemed as if a provision was being made for a contemplated wholesale expulsion of the peasantry from their farms. In 1833, the Government of Lord Grey appointed a commission to inquire into the subject of poor-laws. It consisted of eleven Irish gentlemen, including the Protestant Archbishop Whately, and the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Dr. Murray. Intimations were made to Whately of what the Government expected, but he took no notice of them.¹ The commissioners reported in 1836 against the application of this remedy to Ireland. They said that the Irish poor were able-bodied paupers, eager to work, and they recommended the reclamation of waste lands, better cultivation, improved dwellings, agricultural schools, and attention to the general welfare of the country. This mode of treatment assumed pauperism to be not a functional development of the body corporate, but a local symptom of general maladministration and ill health, which might be easily removed by a proper regimen. Lord John Russell sent a Scotchman named Nicholls, who knew nothing of Ireland, to inquire and report on the subject. Nicholls spent six weeks in the country, and made a report, on which Lord John Russell founded a Poor-law Bill. This bill, introduced February 13th, 1837, proposed the building of workhouses, the division of the country into unions, the equal rating of landlords and tenants for the support of the poor within the union, and the appointment of boards of guardians, one third *ex-officio*, to be placed under the control of commissioners chosen from the English Poor-law Commissioners. There was to be no law of settlement. O'Connell opposed the bill on principle. Several amendments, proposed by him and others, were rejected by immense majorities. In the House of Lords the Duke of Wellington carried an amendment that the unions should be divided into electoral districts, each district to maintain its own poor. This bill became law July 31st, 1838. In 1843 occupiers rented at £4 value were exempted from poor rates. In 1847 the administration of outdoor relief to permanently infirm poor was allowed, and the number of *ex-officio* guardians raised to one-half. The Duke of Wellington's amendment was intended to interest the landlords in their own poor, by making them responsible for them. But the landlords, when their tenants became poor, simply ejected them, and got rid of them altogether. They carried this method of landlord relief to such an extent that whole districts were depopulated, and they could not find hands to gather their crops. The *ex-officio* principle gave them complete power over the administration of the law.

¹ "Life," v. I., p. 199.

SECTION XIII.

The corporations of England and Ireland had fallen into the power of a few self-elected persons. In Ireland they were nests of Orangeism. The Emancipation Act in theory admitted Catholics to corporations, but the men in possession kept the doors shut. A municipal reform act for England was passed in 1835. In the same year a bill was prepared which would give the Irish people the right to elect their municipal rulers. It was carried through the Commons, but it was considered hopeless to send it to the Lords. In 1836 the subject was recommended in the King's Speech, and a measure was introduced. At the second reading Peel proposed the abolition rather than the reform of Irish corporations, and the substitution for them of Crown commissioners. In the Lords this proposal was adopted. As a compromise, Lord John Russell proposed that corporations should be retained in the twelve larger towns, and commissioners elected in the others. The Lords rejected the proposal. In 1837 Lord John Russell reintroduced the original bill. In its passage through committee an important amendment was attempted. In England the corporation chooses the sheriff. So it had been in the unreformed Irish corporations. The Irish act gave the Viceroy a power of veto on the choice of the corporations. An amendment to take away this power was lost by 65 to 5. Its value seems not to have been recognised. O'Connell, Sheil, and Smith O'Brien took no part in the division. The sheriff had the management of the jury lists. In the Lords the Duke of Wellington carried a motion of postponement, and when the period had expired Lord Lyndhurst repeated the proceeding. So the bill fell through. In 1838 Peel adopted the Government plan, but fixed the franchise at £10. A £5 franchise was carried. In the Lords it was changed to £10. Government now proposed £8. The Lords rejected the proposal and postponed the question. In 1839 the same course was gone over again: the bill was passed by the Commons, and altered and swamped in the Lords. In 1840 Government accepted the £10 rating for the larger towns, and proposed £8 for the smaller. In the Lords the £8 was changed to £10; and so the bill became law.

SECTION XIV

In this manner did the Tories, with mechanical malignity, frustrate the efforts of the Government to legislate impartially for Ireland. In this manner did the Lords tantalise with ever-vanishing hopes an expectant and suffering people, leaving them no alternative but the apathy of despair or the activity of exasperated indignation. Lord Lyndhurst was the ringleader. It was in the course of the debates on municipal reform that he spoke of the Irish people as "aliens in blood, in language, and in religion." The memory of those words and of the reply which they called forth will constitute Lord Lyndhurst's immortality. "There is one man," said Sheil, "of great abilities, not a member of this House, but whose talents and whose boldness have placed him in the topmost place in his party—who, disdaining all

imposture, and thinking it the best course to appeal directly to the religious and national antipathies of the people of this country—abandoning all reserve, and flinging off the slender veil by which his political associates affect to cover, although they cannot hide, their motives—distinctly and audaciously tells the Irish people that they are not entitled to the same privileges as Englishmen; and pronounces them, in any particular which could enter his minute enumeration of the circumstances by which fellow-citizenship is created—in race, identity, and religion—to be aliens—to be aliens in race—to be aliens in country—to be aliens in religion. Aliens! Good God! was Arthur, Duke of Wellington, in the House of Lords, and did he not start up and exclaim ‘Hold! I have seen the aliens do their duty!’ The Duke of Wellington is not a man of excitable temperament; his mind is of a cast too martial to be easily moved; but, notwithstanding his habitual inflexibility, I cannot help thinking that when he heard his Roman Catholic countrymen (for we are his countrymen) designated by a phrase as offensive as the abundant vocabulary of his eloquent confederate could supply—I cannot help thinking that he ought to have recollected the many fields of fight in which we have been contributors to his renown. ‘The battles, sieges, fortunes that he has passed’ ought to have come back upon him. He ought to have remembered that, from the earliest achievement in which he displayed that military genius which has placed him foremost in the annals of modern warfare, down to that last and surpassing combat which has made his name imperishable—from Assaye to Waterloo—the Irish soldiers, with whom your armies are filled, were the inseparable auxiliaries to the glory with which his unparalleled successes have been crowned. Whose were the arms that drove your bayonets at Vimiera through the phalanxes that never reeled in the shock of war before? What desperate valour climbed the steepes and filled the moats at Badajoz? All his victories should have rushed and crowded back upon his memory—Vimiera, Badajoz, Salamanca, Albuera, Toulouse, and, last of all, the greatest—tell me, for you were there—I appeal to the gallant soldier before me (Sir Henry Hardinge), from whose opinions I differ, but who bears, I know, a generous heart in an intrepid breast—tell me, for you must needs remember—on that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance—while death fell in showers—when the artillery of France was levelled with a precision of the most deadly science—when her legions, incited by the voice and inspired by the example of their mighty leader—rushed again and again to the onset—tell me if for an instant, when to hesitate for an instant was to be lost, the ‘aliens’ blanched? And when at length the moment for the last and decisive movement had arrived, and the valour which had so long been wisely checked was at last let loose—when, with words familiar but immortal the great captain commanded the great assault—tell me if Catholic Ireland, with less heroic valour than the natives of your own glorious country, precipitated herself upon the foe? The blood of England, Scotland, and of Ireland flowed in the same stream, and drenched the same field. When the chill morning dawned, the dead lay cold and stark together; in the same deep pit their bodies were deposited. The green corn of spring is now breaking from their commingled dust;

the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave. Partakers in every peril, in the glory shall we not be permitted to participate? And shall we be told, as a requital, that we are estranged from the noble country for whose salvation our life-blood was poured out?"

The true significance of Lord Lyndhurst's words is hidden in Sheil's elaborate and triumphant refutation. They acquire a dignity and a reality that do not belong to them by its being deemed necessary to disprove them, by showing that Irishmen mingled their blood with that of Englishmen in continental battles. Lord Lyndhurst's taunt was merely the trick of the hunted pickpocket who cries "stop thief" to mislead the crowd. The unpopularity of Ireland made the Lords irresponsible. They could riot in mischief without being called to account by any authority which they feared. They took full advantage of licence. They left no subject of Irish legislation untouched, and whatever they touched they deformed. They forged the ploughs and pruning hooks of law into swords and spears. The machinery that was meant to emancipate and relieve they turned into instruments of torture and execution. The Tithes Commutation Act, the Municipal Reform Act, the Poor-law Act, they so manipulated as to make them bulwarks of landlord power. We may school ourselves so as to bear personal slights and wrongs when we know them to be inevitable to the effort by which some good is effected; but when the good is turned into evil, we grow impatient at suffering in vain, or worse than in vain. The opposition of the Lords was almost wholly directed against O'Connell. In 1835 a measure was introduced that would assimilate the inefficient police force of Dublin, which was under the control of the corrupt corporation, to the new force constituted on Peel's principle in London. The Lords heard that O'Connell took an interest in its progress, and that it was unpalatable to the Dublin Corporation, and they rejected it with contempt. This same year O'Connell made a progress through the north of England and Scotland, exposing and denouncing the conduct of the Peers. The multitude heard, and applauded, and treasured his words. Then an attempt was made to ostracise him. Burdett insisted on his removal from Brooke's Club, and resigned when he could not have his way. Sixty other resignations followed.

SECTION XV.

In one particular direction or development the spirit of tyranny ran its full course and betrayed itself. After the Catholic Association was suppressed, Orangeism continued to extend its ramifications. The Duke of Cumberland was Grand Master of the Order—Cabinet Ministers held other offices in it. Its lodges were established not only in Ireland, but in England and Canada; and it was sedulously extending itself in the army. The organisation was secret, but the temper could not conceal itself. Orange juries refused to convict Orange prisoners. "That is your verdict, gentlemen," said Chief Justice Bushe, to one set of jurymen; "thank God it is not mine." Their noblemen, at public meetings, called on their hearers to prepare against another Sicilian Vespers. When Peel came into office, in 1834, Goulburn, an Orangeman,

was Home Secretary. Orange congratulatory addresses were presented to the King, and received with gracious acknowledgment. The Liberals complained that the Tory Ministers were encouraging illegal societies. Finn, member for Kilkenny, asked for a select committee to inquire into the subject as it affected Ireland. The Orangemen defiantly supported the motion, and a committee was appointed. It appeared in debate that the Duke of Cumberland had accepted the Grand Mastership, although he knew that the Duke of York had resigned the post because of its illegality; and had signed warrants for the formation of Orange lodges in the army, although the Duke of York had forbidden them. An address was carried condemning the formation of Orange lodges in the army, and a circular was issued by the Commander-in-Chief, ordering the trial by court-martial of any officer or soldier who belonged to an Orange lodge. The Duke of Cumberland refused to resign the Grand Mastership. A fresh committee was formed to inquire into Orangeism in Great Britain and the Colonies. The Orangemen resisted the appointment of this committee in repeated divisions, and when it was appointed, the Duke of Cumberland refused to give evidence before it, and the Deputy Grand Secretary refused to produce the records of the society. In February, 1836, Mr. Finn renewed his attack, and finally an address was carried, leaving it to the King to take such steps as he might deem advisable for the effectual discouragement of Orange lodges. The Duke of Cumberland submitted, and the lodges were everywhere broken up. It was notorious at the time that the Orange party contemplated setting aside the claims of the Princess Victoria, and placing the Duke of Cumberland on the throne. The avowal of this purpose escaped from every excited Orangeman, or body of Orangemen, as steam from a boiling cauldron. The organisation for effecting this end was destroyed, but the disappointed wish smouldered and burned in the scattered members of the society, and broke out in unmeasured abuse of the Queen on and after her accession, not in Ireland only, but in England also. "No opposition," Greville wrote in 1839, "was ever more rabid than this; no people ever treated or spoke of their sovereign with such marked contempt."¹ "This speech," he again wrote, alluding to an after-dinner address, "principally remarkable for a personal attack on the Queen of the most violent and indecent kind, was received with shouts of applause at a Conservative dinner, and reported by the Tory press."²

O'Connell, indignant at the conduct of the Lords, commenced a new agitation in Ireland under the name of the Precursor Society (1838). The title implied that if the object of the society was not gained, a demand for repeal would follow. Those objects were: corporate reform, extension of the suffrage, and an increased number of representatives. The immediate purpose was to support the Ministry. The magistrates of Tipperary, availing themselves of a recent murder, made an application for coercion, and were replied to by Mr. Drummond, the Under Secretary. Lord Donoughmore, who was the recipient of the reply, was examined in 1839 before a Committee of the House of Lords on the state of

¹ "Greville's Memoirs," 2nd part, vol. I., p. 238.

² *Ibid.*, p. 244.

Ireland. He was asked what steps he took on the receipt of Mr. Drummond's letter. He answered that it was of such a character that he did not make it public. He was asked what passage he objected to. "The part," he answered, "to which I particularly objected was this: 'Property has its duties as well as its rights: to the neglect of those duties in times past is mainly to be ascribed that diseased state of society in which crimes take their rise.'"

A sense of failing strength oppressed the Government. They were well intentioned, but neither enthusiastic nor thoroughly in earnest. Yet during their tenure of office they had effected more solid good than any other Government within the same time. They abolished slavery at home, and facilitated liberty at home, and they did much, by O'Connell's aid, for which they had not been able to make an adequate return. The first fact alienated the Whigs, the latter the Radicals. Stanley vented his rancour. The story of the Lichfield House compact was revived. Mulgrave contemplated resigning, and while he delayed Lord Norbury was murdered (January 1st, 1839) with the opportuneness that marks such events in Ireland. Mulgrave then retired as Marquis of Normanby, and Ebrington, as Baron Fortescue, took his place in March. Lord Roden moved what was equivalent to a vote of censure on the government of Ireland, and the unwise clemency of the Viceroy in pardoning convicts, and carried it by a small majority. Russell declared that he would take the opinion of the Commons on the subject. O'Connell called on his followers to declare their confidence in the Ministry, and on the 15th of April the Lower House reversed the verdict of the Upper by a majority of 22. On the 3rd of May the Ministry had a majority of only five on the Jamaica Bill, and resigned.

Peel immediately formed a Ministry, but insisted legally, yet ungraciously, on the removal of the Whig Ladies of the Bedchamber from their posts. The Queen would not consent; the nation rallied to her support, and Melbourne resumed office. In May, 1841, Peel carried a motion of want of confidence in the Ministry by one vote. Parliament was dissolved (June 22nd), re-assembled with a large Conservative majority (August 19th), Melbourne resigned, and Peel became Prime Minister (September 3rd), Earl de Grey took the post of Viceroy, and Lord Eliott (afterwards Earl of St. Germain) that of Chief Secretary.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE REPEAL ASSOCIATION.

SECTION I.

THE Precursor Society having failed in its end, O'Connell, on the 15th of April, 1840, founded the Repeal Association. He was then 65 years of age. He had given some of the best years of his life to the politics of the United Kingdom, and by his support had maintained a Liberal Ministry in office, and only when the return of the Tories to power was inevitable did he adopt the second alternative which he had proposed to himself, and undertake to promote the interests of his country as a separate object. It was, in fact, his method of going into opposition. His first meeting was held in the Corn Exchange, and in a room capable of seating five hundred persons about one hundred were present. He waited for more than half an hour, in hope of additional arrivals; and at length, moved by some tokens of impatience in the assembly, commenced: "My fellow-countrymen," he said, "I rise with the deep sense of the awful importance of the step I am about to propose to the Irish people, and a full knowledge of the difficulties by which we are surrounded, and the obstacles we have to contend with. I trust that my heart is pure, and my judgment on the present occasion unclouded; and I declare in the presence of that God who is to judge me for an eternity of weal or woe, that I have no object in view but the good of my native land, and that I feel in the deepest sense the responsibility I am about to incur. We are about to enter on a struggle that will terminate only in having the most ample justice done to Ireland, by placing her on an equality with the sister country, or by the establishment of our legislative independence." Such were the conditions in reference to England with which O'Connell commenced his repeal agitation in 1840. The conditions in reference to Ireland he explained in a scheme which he issued on the 4th of May for the construction of the restored Parliament. It was to consist of 300 members; 127 to represent cities and towns, and 173 counties. This proposed distribution of seats was the offer of a preponderating influence to the landlord interest in the government of their country.

SECTION II.

Distress had reached alarming proportions in both islands at this period. Food riots of a most dangerous character were taking place in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in the course of which several lives were lost. The Welsh had a peculiar grievance, which broke out in the Rebecca disturbances. Chartism advanced through all parts of England with giant strides, and summoned the people to open war against the authorities. The Anti-Corn Law League was established to remove the

causes of suffering and discontent. The movement towards freedom is identical in England and Ireland. When it is opposed or obstructed by the party of privilege, it takes different forms. The people of England were starving while abundance was prevented from flowing in by a duty on corn that protected the landlords' rent. In Ireland the people were starving while corn and cattle poured in a great river from her shores to produce the absentee landlords' rent. Ireland asked for a repeal of the Union, that the landlords might spend their rent at home, and that sufficient corn might remain in the country to feed the population. England has two labouring populations—the agricultural and the manufacturing. The demand for repeal of the corn laws was made in reality for the sake of the manufacturing population. When the demand was granted the change did not affect the condition of the agricultural labourer. Ireland had only an agricultural population, and therefore her demand was for repeal of the Union. The manufacturers of England were seeking deliverance from a distinct, and, in some degree, a rival interest on their own soil. The only way in which Ireland could obtain deliverance from the united landlordism of the two countries, which had its chief seat in England, was by home legislation. No common law could protect both countries from landlord power. The victory which the Free traders won did not extend to Ireland. Landlordism and its cognate interests in the two countries have the same object in reference to Ireland, and that is to make it a grazing farm or cornfield for England, and to treat its population in entire subserviency to this design. In 1843 three million quarters of grain and a million head of live stock were exported from Ireland to England. It is argued that this was a sign of prosperity, or that this exportation represented so much money returning to Ireland. But this money did not return to Ireland. Five millions rental left Ireland this same year for England, and at the same time the population was emigrating at the rate of a hundred thousand a year. The nature of this emigration may be inferred from the advertisements of emigration agents, which offered gentlemen who wished to send out their surplus tenantry credit for six months. The landlords in Ireland, or their agents, were sole judges of what constituted a surplus tenantry, and they formed their judgment not in reference to Ireland, from whence their rents were drawn, but in reference to the United Kingdom, which meant England, where their rents were spent. Sir Archibald Alison, writing in 1833, stated that the emigration from Ireland in 1831 amounted to eighteen thousand. "No reason," he added, "can be assigned why it should not be a hundred and eighty thousand."¹ Can any fair-minded Englishman wonder that O'Connell asked to have a parliament in Dublin to deliberate, not leaving the decision altogether to Sir Archibald Alison, whether or not a reason could be assigned? But, in fact, the language of this writer brings the matter to its true issue. There are positions and assertions which are not matter of reasoning. The principle that a nation should make its own laws is only weakened and clouded by assigning reasons for it; and, on the other hand, if this principle be denied, all further assigning of reasons is out of the question. Between

¹ "Blackwood's Magazine," Jan., 1833.

two nations, or two individuals, there is the instinct that preserves life and the conscience that will not take life. If the instinct or the conscience be allowed, there is no need to reason. If they be denied, reasoning is useless. Ireland's instinct is to save herself. England's conscience is not to destroy Ireland. But if the conscience be put aside, no reason can be assigned to show at what rate the destruction is to go on; only Ireland's instinct must assert itself, and it is the character of instinct also to assign no reasons. There is, however, a difference to be noted. Instinct is intuitive and active reason; but the man who pretends to reason without a conscience only raves.

SECTION III.

At the election of 1841 O'Connell lost his seat for Dublin. He was, however, elected Lord Mayor in the November of that year. Many who judge of him from the common titles of agitator, demagogue, orator, connected with his name, will form a very false notion of the man. He was an indefatigable worker, with an extraordinary power and versatility of mind. Whatever work came to his hand, he gave himself to it as a hungry man to a feast, or a miser to his gold. All that he said or did was genuine work. And he had this characteristic of the true worker, that he believed in whatever occupied him. He could not be a hypocrite in politics or religion, because they were both work to him. He instantly applied himself to the duties of the mayoralty, and revised the burgess roll, which contained 18,000 names, in a few days, arriving at the last name within two minutes of the expiration of the allowed time. As he arose from his completed task, loud applause burst forth from friends and foes. Such was the spirit in which O'Connell set himself to the last effort of his life. He toiled at it till his enemies sprang on him from an ambush, and then Heaven intervened, and took the nation into its hands.

In proportion as the repeal agitation became known, the multitude arose at the summons. Three provincial meetings were held in Leinster, Connaught, and Munster. At the Leinster meeting (October, 1840) a quarter of a million of persons were said to be present. The Catholic clergy sent in their adhesion. On one occasion a bishop and eighty-three of his clergy were enrolled at once. In September, 1842, a directorate of three were sent into the provinces, who brought together knots of friends at private houses, gathered information in the neighbourhood of ruined trade, deserted mansions, and starving peasants, addressed public meetings, and published reports. At first the English press was silent; then it ridiculed, then it abused. It mattered little by what means the subject became known: opposition only gave occasion for explanation, or refuted itself. Pamphlets were written against repeal, and gave room for rejoinders. Concurrently with repeal, temperance, under the advocacy of Father Mathew, was spreading through the country. The two movements were absolutely distinct, save that sobriety ensured moderation, and kept the peace.

The enemies of Ireland saw design and danger in Irish morality. A clergyman alleged that "temperance was of the devil;" another,

that "teetotalism was highly insulting to the majesty of God;" and a third, in the *Quarterly Review*, asserted that Irish temperance arose from superstition, and tended to murder. The Ulster Orangemen, when Father Mathew projected a visit to their district, appealed to the spirit of William, combined to extrude the opponent of deep potation, and encouraged one another to keep their powder dry. The Viceroy, Lord Ebrington, in his department announced that no member of the Repeal Association should hold any office under the Government.¹ A new journal, the *Nation*, edited by Duffy, and contributed to by Davis, appeared on the 15th of October, 1842. About this time the directorate returned from their mission, and the repeal rent, which on their departure was £45 14s. 8d., rose to £235.²

SECTION IV.

In 1843 O'Connell declared that the year when repeal was to be won had arrived. He discontinued his attendance in Parliament, which now held a secondary place in public attention, and gave notice of a motion which he intended to bring before the corporation, "that a petition should be presented to Parliament from the Corporation of Dublin for a Repeal of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland." This subject came on for debate on the 25th of February. The discussion lasted for three days. On a division, the motion was supported by forty-one members, and opposed by fifteen. The chief speaker in the opposition was Isaac Butt, then quite a young man, with every prospect of a great career before him. He had been Professor of Political Economy in Trinity College, had edited the *University Magazine*, and was making brilliant progress at the bar. He argued that the good results of the Union were still to come. More than twenty years after he went through some of O'Connell's experience, and came to his conclusion. The corporation debate made a wide and deep impression. Numerous important accessions were made. Almost all the bishops, the archbishops, Lord Ffrench, the O'Connor Don, and several Ulster Protestants, including John Mitchel, joined the association. The repeal rent was trebled in amount. The general business became so great that it was found necessary to hold two meetings in the week, and, the attendance proving too large for the Corn Exchange, the foundation of a new building, to be called "Conciliation Hall," was laid on the 30th of March, 1843. O'Connell left Dublin for the provinces, and a series of vast open-air meetings was held, which were attended by multitudes varying from 50,000 to 250,000. The other reformed corporations followed the example of Dublin. These discussions informed and inspired the country, and gave it the consciousness, by awakening the claim, of independence. The Tory press advised that the arguments of the Repealers should not be replied to, but silently voted against. Independent arguments were, however, ventured on. A Mr. Martin, who had failed in carrying on a repeal newspaper in London, produced a pamphlet on "Ireland before and after the Union," in which he undertook to show

¹ O'Neill Daunt's "Eighty-five Years," vol. II., p. 23.

² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

that the Union was the starting-point of Ireland's prosperity. All the anti-repeal press lauded this production as unanswerable and decisive. It proved its point by showing that between 1782 and 1800 a decrease had occurred in fifteen items of export, omitting that there had been a very large increase in nineteen other articles during the very same year.

SECTION V.

But there was another force than that of argument to deal with, another mode of refutation than that of silence. The Protestant population—with, of course, exceptions—looked on the repeal movement as worse than a servile insurrection. A writer who had ample opportunity and room to judge, has left a pregnant comment on the active forces of this period: "There are many instances," he says, "on record of a conquering and a conquered nation or faction quietly amalgamating together; but then that is by the exercise of some degree of moderation, firmness, and prudence on the part of the victors. Now, in all these three requisites the Irish are remarkably deficient. The English apply all they hear of the Irish national character to the Roman Catholics, and imagine that Protestants—men of their own Church—are much such men as themselves; whereas a Roman Catholic or an Orangeman are much more like each other than either of them to an Englishman. The chief difference in respect of the present point is implacability. The English are turbulent, violent, and unjust when their passions are roused; but they would not go on year after year, and generation after generation, trampling on, insulting, and tormenting a fallen foe. In Ireland, *parcere subjectis* is unknown. They are never weary of tyrannising over the conquered. The very name of Orangeman is a sign. It is chosen *on purpose* to keep up the memory of a civil war, which every friend of humanity would wish to bury in oblivion. It is doing what among the heathen was reckoned an accursed deed—keeping a trophy *in repair*. The English would have too much, if not of Christian feeling, at least of good taste, to assemble in Paris to celebrate the battle of Waterloo. The Irish parade Orange flags and decorate King William's statue, and play the tunes of insulting songs under the noses of the vanquished, till they are goaded to madness; and it is curious to observe that they are more studious to provoke than to disable their enemies. They are like sportsmen, who preserve foxes on purpose to hunt them." He then says that "many instances have come to his knowledge of the most furious Orangemen stripping their estates of a Protestant tenantry, who had been there for generations, and letting their lands to Roman Catholics (who could afford to offer at least a higher rent, from being accustomed to a poorer style of living) for an advance of a shilling an acre."¹ "The English," he again writes, "cling to the belief that Protestant ascendancy, or the ascendancy of some one party, would pacify the country, which could only be through the complete extermination of its opponents. As long as any of the adverse sect remained, the victors would never cease insulting and goading them, till they brought on a fresh rebellion; and so there would be, as for the last six hundred years, a

¹ "Life of Whately," i., 127.

perpetual succession of battle, murder, and sudden death. But this is never adequately understood by the English nation, who are perhaps haughty and selfish governors of the vanquished, but not restless and wanton tormentors. A conquered enemy of the English is an ox yoked to the plough, to drudge ; of the Irish, a bull tied to the stake, to be baited."¹ By "Ireland," "the Irish," and "the Irish national character," is, of course, meant Irish Protestantism, or Orangeism. It is of this Archbishop Whately writes. His language shows this, for he speaks of the import of the name Orangemen, and of Orange flags, and King William's statue. The victories which the Orangemen celebrate were not won against an Irish cause, but against an English king. King James was conquered by King William, but the Irish army was not conquered. When the cause of the English King was lost, the Irish soldiers made good terms, and left the country. The only victories which Protestants can celebrate over the Irish are the victories of outraged compacts and violated treaties. Those victories are peculiarly their own. And when it is said that the English would not go on generation after generation trampling on a fallen foe, it is forgotten that the treaties were broken under the sanction of the English Government and with the support of English soldiers, and that the same Government and armies that empowered the violation empower the celebrations of it down to the present day. What the Orangeman in Ireland is to the Catholic, that England, represented by her ruling faction, is to Ireland. The Tory is an absentee ruler, and the Orangeman is his agent. "The English are turbulent, violent, and unjust when their passions are roused." But the passions of a Tory are always roused by the slightest contact of an Irish topic. He differs from his brother, the Orangeman, in this respect only as gunpowder differs from blasting-powder ; the grain is finer—there the difference ends. Any person who reads magazine or newspaper articles, or the report of a speech, on the anti-Irish side, will at once perceive that he is walking amid primitive fires and volcanic commotions which have not got settled, under the cooling influences of reason and conscience, into the disposition of order, and civilisation, and peace. Irish Protestantism in its Orange development is not a religion. The religious element in it is only an accident. Its essence is the turbulent self-assertion and brutal pride of the robber, surviving into an age in which intellectual qualities are claiming the direction of affairs. Out of place amid the usages of modern life, and unequipped with the weapons with which political triumphs are won, it commemorates the bloodshed of the past, and threatens the repetition of it in the future. In proportion as it is left to itself it becomes slowly tamed by the humanising influences that surround it. If it were thrown wholly on its own resources, it would be compelled to take such place as its intrinsic merits entitled it to : it would lose its fighting instincts ; it would gain an aptitude for honourable pursuits and a sense of justice. This is the doom the bare thought of which drives it frantic. It is furious at having to contend on equal terms, in the encounters of peace, with men whom it affected to despise and scorn, and whom to insult was the sole triumph of its life. So it always appeals to England

¹ "Life of Whately," I., 166.

for help, and a faction in England, by the foulest procedure that disgraces human history, re-kindles and feeds its dying fires.

SECTION VI.

Mr. Lefroy, member for the University, a partisan of so marked a type that he was said to hold that George IV. had forfeited his right to the throne by signing the Emancipation Act, inquired in the House of Commons whether Government contemplated suppressing the repeal meetings. No direct reply was given, but Mr. Lefroy was shortly after raised to the bench. On the 9th of May Lord Roden, Grand Master of the Orangemen, in the House of Lords, and his son in the Commons, demanded whether Ministers intended to maintain the Legislative Union. Sir Robert Peel said that there was no influence, power, or authority which the prerogatives of the Crown and existing law could give which would not be exercised for maintaining the Union, the dissolution of which would not merely repeal an Act of Parliament, but dismember the empire. And he concluded in these words: "I am prepared to make the declaration which was made, and nobly made, by my predecessor, Lord Althorp, that, deprecating as I do all war, but above all civil war, yet there is no alternative which I do not think preferable to the dismemberment of this empire." He was then asked by an English member whether he would abide by another declaration of Lord Althorp's, to the effect that if all the Irish representatives were in favour of repeal, he would feel bound to grant it; and he answered that the present Cabinet were not prepared to adopt any such declaration. The sounding phrase, "dismemberment of the empire," really means interruption to the Tory policy of substituting foreign annexation and conquest for attention to plain and pressing domestic legislation. When it is repeated in answer to an argument for Home Rule, it implies that the conquest of Burmah is preferable to the pacification of Ireland. The existence of a Parliament in Dublin could, in no conceivable way, lead to the loss of a single British possession. But it would be a humiliation to that tyrannic pride which would sacrifice constitutional government for distant and absolute authority. The only empire that would suffer from uniting Ireland to England by equal laws, would be that domineering temper of contempt and insult, that half-drunken dream of voluptuous Orientalism, that vision of glory which the tempter of mankind raises in the imaginations of rulers to turn them from the path of duty. If this empire can be dismembered, if pride of place can be made to give way to the sobriety of the public servant, England has as powerful a reason as Ireland for modifying the present Union. When Sir Robert Peel said that, if the Irish members were unanimous in seeking repeal, he would not grant it, he only spoke the words of personal petulance and passion. Lord Althorp denied that he had ever said that he would grant repeal to a unanimous demand for it; but that is quite different from saying that if the unanimous demand was made it would be refused. Lord Althorp and Sir Robert Peel both knew well that if Ireland were unanimous in making any demand whatever, no English Minister would refuse it. Lord Althorp denied that he had in

any way contemplated this unanimity. Sir Robert Peel imagined it, and helped to provoke the imagination into a fact. More unstatesman-like words were never used in the most reckless flight of Fenian oratory. They were merely meant to dishonour and provoke.

SECTION VII.

It was not repeal of the Union only that Sir Robert Peel announced he would not grant to united Ireland. Repeal was avowedly sought as the alternative to just government. Early in this year Frederic Lucas, then known as the editor of the *Tablet*, visited Ireland. With that thoroughness which characterised his life and everything that he undertook, he visited the homes and made himself acquainted with the circumstances of the tenants and cultivation of the soil. Before his return he was introduced to the Repeal Association, and, though not then a Repealer, invited to speak. He said that till his present journey "he never had the slightest conception that any class of beings could be ground down to so miserable a state as that of the peasantry he had seen in the various counties through which he had passed ; and that when he got back to England, whatever his opinions as to the aptness of repeal, he would always declare that it was not an extreme or violent measure, when taken in connection with the evils under which the country unfortunately laboured."¹ When Ireland was threatened with civil war, there was no promise or prospect of the alternative redress. Simultaneously with Peel's threat a new Arms Act was introduced, which provided that arms should be kept only by a certificate from two householders rated to the poor at £20, and that they should be all registered and branded by the police, who might make domiciliary visits and break into houses by day or night on the order of a magistrate. The possession of a pike or spear was punishable by transportation. Mr. Sharman Crawford moved, and Lord Clements seconded, the rejection of this measure. Ministers were reminded that the repeal agitation arose from the neglect of Parliament to keep its promise of 1834, and "remove all just causes of complaint." The Irish Attorney-General said that the measures demanded by the Opposition as the alternative to repeal never could be conceded. Thus the whole way was blocked. Five weeks after the introduction of the Arms Bill, the Irish Chancellor deprived all magistrates who attended repeal meetings of their commissions. Smith O'Brien immediately resigned his commission. The association appointed arbitration courts, in which the dismissed magistrates distributed justice. O'Brien brought forward a motion on July the 4th for a committee of inquiry into the condition of Ireland. After an important debate of five days' continuance, it was rejected by 243 to 164. The Arms Bill was then read a third time, and passed through the Lords without interruption. On the 24th August Parliament was prorogued. Meantime the repeal cause was progressing, overcoming Orange prejudice, winning English Liberal support, gaining the sympathy of the world. The monster meetings, as they were called by the English press, continued to be held. They numbered about forty-five altogether. O'Connell, now sixty-eight years old, was their attraction, their life, their memory. The

¹ "Life of F. Lucas," vol. I., p. 123.

whole organisation was free from detective influence, except in the post-office. O'Connell's correspondence had been for years, and was still, regularly read and opened there. Bodies of soldiers often were drawn up near the meetings, and well-known emissaries who had been employed in creating disturbances at anti-corn law meetings in England were busy in the crowds, but the temper and order of the people were unassailable. Several Whig peers were in course of recommending large concessions. The autumn was closing, and the season for holding out-door meetings was nearly over. One, the last or almost the last of the intended series, was announced for October the 8th. Nothing had ever been known like those great assemblies, brought together and conducted peaceably and legally, to declare a nation's wants. This approach to immediate success justified O'Connell's policy. He acted on the belief that if an overwhelming demonstration of popular sentiment were made, its requirements would be conceded in Ireland as certainly as they would be in England. Only they who look at a battle instead of a campaign, or a campaign instead of a history, think of them as failures. They failed as to an immediate purpose, but they did not fail in the end. Only trivial causes are won in single battles. The great cause must be hallowed by defeats; and these defeats are more inspiring than victories. Thermopylæ is a greater name than Marathon. '98 did more for Ireland than Waterloo for England. O'Connell is blamed and ridiculed because he promised immediate success. He did so, and believed what he said. This must be the case with every great teacher or leader, just in proportion as he mingles his soul with the vastness and voluminousness of a mighty human enterprise. The unconcerned spectator, or the self-interested soldier of fortune, can correctly estimate the chances of success and foresee the coming check, which to him seems final. But the man who does the work for the work's sake, who is a living part of the undertaking, is not arrested by disaster or delayed by interruptions; he is conscious already of the end, and final victory, however distant it be, is his. The true apostle will always proclaim that the kingdom of God is at hand. Man requires some alleviations during the protracted struggle in which he is engaged. The sower of truth must often be contented with the blossom. The heart of the nation blossomed under the warmth of O'Connell's zeal. The blossom died; but the seed ripens, and the air is still laden with the fragrance of the withered leaves, wafted from summer to summer over the wintry waste.

SECTION VIII.

The nation was marching onwards to the trumpet tones of O'Connell's voice. Just when its step was lightest and its heart most buoyant, just when fear and caution were lost in enthusiastic hope, just when it was speeding over the last stages to the goal to seize the prize, suddenly Government, bristling with arms, stood right in its path. The trumpet as quickly sounded the note of alarm, and the nation stood still, face to face with the baffled foe. The almost inevitable collision was avoided. The Clontarf meeting was to take place on Sunday, the 8th of October. On Friday evening the *Mail* announced that the proposed meeting would

be suppressed. On Saturday, at noon, the committee of the association met to await events. At half-past three o'clock a proclamation was issued warning all persons from attendance at the meeting, and ordering all magistrates and officers, and all others concerned, to aid in suppressing it. O'Connell at once announced his intention to submit. Had the meeting been persevered with, the bloodshed that must have taken place would have the shelter of legality, after the proclamation. O'Connell issued an address, declaring the meeting abandoned; it was posted during the night at the centres of population within twenty miles of Clontarf. Parties of gentlemen known to the people were employed until morning sending back the assembling crowds. A priest lost his life from the fatigue of this night. Dublin was placed in a state of siege. All the guards at the Barracks and Castle were doubled. The city and its approaches were patrolled by soldiers and mounted police. Three vessels in the river had their guns run out, commanding the site of the meeting. The 34th Regiment arrived on Sunday morning from Glasgow. When day dawned, the hill overlooking Clontarf was occupied by horse, foot, and artillery. The dragoons were accoutred for active service, each man and horse being provisioned for twenty-four hours. The foot soldiers were served each with sixty rounds of ball cartridge. A brigade of artillery had four six-pounders ready for use, and lighted matches. The cannons of the Pigeon House Fort were in position to sweep the roads leading from the city. The commander of the forces and the Viceroy visited the ground in the course of the day, but had the field to themselves.

Had the people assembled in their usual numbers, and had a collision taken place, it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty what the result would have been. O'Connell was perfectly sincere in his strict adherence to moral displays in urging the concession of a native parliament to his country. Among the motives that conduced to this determination, besides his natural repugnance to bloodshed, his knowledge from early experience of the inability of a mob, or crowd of men, to stand the onset of a few armed and drilled policemen or soldiers, must have had a place. The constabulary force, organised by Peel, unless some alteration takes place in its management, will bring some fatal calamity even on England. Armed regiments are seldom, if ever, seen marching through English towns; but under this constitutional reserve a more dangerous exhibition of power is daily cowing the spirit of the people. A positive revolution has taken place in this respect within the last quarter of a century. Policemen have almost succeeded in driving all manly, independent action from the habits of Englishmen. Coroners' juries frequently append to their verdict a severe censure on some one who quietly stood looking on while a prolonged brutal murder was committed, or death by drowning took place. Men dare not interfere with what is supposed to be only policemen's work. If a policeman were seen in the street offering the most cruel ill-treatment to an unoffending prisoner, any passer-by who interfered merely in remonstrance would be dragged before a magistrate and sent to prison.¹ Men accustomed to be browbeaten at home are in danger of

¹ See Serjeant Ballantine's "Experience of a Barrister's Life," vol. II., pp. 16-32.

crouching before a display of authority or resolution wherever they are confronted by it. The servile fear is not expelled by wearing a soldier's uniform. Much depends on accident in collisions between a crowd and soldiers. Small bodies of policemen had frequently about this time routed hundreds of peasants. On one occasion, when the police shot the first man, the peasants, instead of being dismayed, became infuriated, and slew all the policemen on the spot. On other occasions they had shown the most undaunted courage in conflicts with soldiers or policemen. Something of this kind might possibly, and only by the barest possibility, have occurred at Clontarf had the meeting been held. But for O'Connell, who was only a lawyer, and had undertaken to free his country by legal measures, without military knowledge, without officers, without arms, without disciplined forces, to attack or resist the troops of England, would have been an act not merely of inconsistency with his character and profession, but in itself of positive criminal madness. It would be walking into the trap that had been laid for him. Had a massacre of the unarmed multitude been made, the men who did the deed would wither to this day under the world's curse; but we may fully credit them with the intention, which they did not conceal.¹ And the crime they failed to commit on the battlefield they did fully commit in the more sacred field of the constitution.

SECTION IX.

On the 14th of October O'Connell, his son John, T. M. Ray, the Secretary of the Association, Thomas Steele, known as Head Pacificator, Richard Barrett, editor of the *Pilot*, John Gray, editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, C. G. Duffy, editor of the *Nation*, and Fathers Tyrrell and Tierney, were arrested on a charge of conspiracy, and bail was given. On the 8th of November the Grand Jury found a "true bill," and, after a vain attempt by the Attorney-General to hurry on the trial, it was arranged that it should take place on the 15th of January.

The prosecution was followed by increased enthusiasm and subscriptions, and important conversions to the national movement. The Archbishop of Cashel, who had hitherto stood aloof, now gave in his adhesion; Frederic Lucas declared himself a Repealer; and Smith O'Brien, finding all other efforts vain, joined the association. The first weekly meeting of the association after the suppression of the Clontarf meeting was so crowded that the committee were compelled to adjourn to the theatre, in Abbey Street. On October the 23rd Conciliation Hall was formally opened.

O'Connell sought repeal only as a means to an end, that end being just and equal rule. Had the Government treated Englishmen and Irishmen, Catholics and Protestants, on equal terms, he would have brought his agitation to a close. He was also conscientiously and anxiously resolved to confine himself to legitimate political agitation. In fact, he was assuming that, on a fundamental ground, England and Ireland were equal. He knew that in England such displays of popular feeling as he was producing would, by the constitution of the country,

Railkes' Diary."

win whatever requirement they represented. He took for granted that the same principle must hold good in Ireland. So he never contemplated, or contemplated only to condemn and disown, any resort to physical force. A new body of youthful writers and thinkers had lately sprung up around him, who held more advanced views in both those particulars. They were students, antiquarians, journalists, literary men. They considered O'Connell's method and object obsolete and discredited, but they expected to be able to use his influence in working out their own ends. Those ends were national independence, gained, if necessary, by armed force. With those views, they undertook to educate the people, to give them intelligent views of their capabilities, of their duty, of their country, history, and antiquities, of military tactics—of all that a free people should know and do. They laboured through the newspapers and by means of various national publications to make the people think and reflect, and so far as they succeeded in this special object they in some degree substituted a sentimental self-consciousness for unconscious vigour, and developed individuality at the expense of the simultaneousness of common passion. The Young Irelanders—for so they were called—taught speculatively that Protestants and Catholics should forego their differences and blend into national homogeneity. O'Connell strove to make the Catholic as he was, equal, before the law, to the Protestant as he was. He would merge their differences not in philosophy, but in civic freedom. When equal legally, they would tolerate and respect each other. This unquestionably is the only rational and the highest form of toleration. It was also to be preferred on grounds of expediency. Catholic zeal had kept the people together, and inspired them as no other sentiment ever did. The relaxation of this religious fervour might follow the accomplishment of their freedom, but it would not lead to it. In their collisions with policemen and soldiers, after the Young Irelanders had propagated their doctrines, no such heroic and determined resistance was seen as had been exhibited by the peasantry at Carrigshock and Rathcormack. The new school helped O'Connell's mission largely by widening its horizon, but in proportion as they widened the horizon they somewhat weakened the vision and distracted the aim.

SECTION X.

In preparation for the State trials a revival of the special jury list was made before the Recorder. Counsel were employed to oppose the admission of any Catholic against whom an objection could be raised. Still a number of Catholic names remained on the list. The names were sent from day to day, when passed, to the Sheriff's office, to be placed in his book. The Sheriff in Dublin, by the late Municipal Act, was appointed by the Crown. In or between the Recorder's and the Sheriff's offices one of the slips containing the names was lost. It contained sixty-seven names, and a larger proportion of them were Catholic than were on any other slip. The indictment which was sent to the Grand Jury on the 2nd of November, and found a "true bill" on the 8th, in printed form was equal in size to fifty-seven pages of the

Times. It contained eleven counts, in which the various alleged illegal acts were so disposed as to strike at each of the nine accused individuals, and include them altogether in the general charge of conspiracy. The Attorney-General had declared that he was about to disclose "as wicked and foul a conspiracy as ever disturbed an empire." His party, supposing that he had made a discovery—possibly through letters opened in the post office—of criminal proceedings hitherto secretly conducted by the prisoners, and now about to be brought for the first time into the light of day, exulted with impatient expectation. The ascendancy newspapers credulously proclaimed the coming exposure as one that would cover the Repealers with infamy, and overwhelm their leaders with extreme legal penalties. But the Attorney-General only expressed the vague declamatory passion of the Tory partisan, roused by contemplating the imaginary disturbance of an empire. This wild and floating sense of the word conspiracy he strove awkwardly to cram into the terms of the law of conspiracy, and judges and jurors, when they saw what he wanted, entered into his design.

The counsel for the traversers—a term applied to the accused gentlemen after they had traversed or denied the indictment—applied for a list of the witnesses examined before the Grand Jury, according to the English practice. It was refused; one judge only ruled in their favour. The Chief Justice gave his reasons for the refusal. "Their defence," he said, "if any defence they have, does not depend on the names of the witnesses, but the nature of the charge . . . The defendants would not be a whit benefited by knowing whether the names of the witnesses are A, B, or C." They asked for a list of the jurors' names from which the jury was to be struck, a certain number of whom they had a right to challenge; and this was refused also.

On January 15th, 1844, the trial commenced. The traversers' counsel objected to the jury list on the ground that several names had been abstracted from it. The Crown admitted that it was so, but denied that it was a valid objection. The judges, except one, agreed with the Crown. In these adverse decisions no consciousness of motive was supposed to exist. Law knows no partialities, and all its officers claimed the infallibility of law. Technical phrases protected actions dictated by the meanest passions, portentous in their criminality, disastrous in their results. A jury consisting of twelve Protestants was formed. The trial lasted twenty-five days. During its progress two incidents occurred aptly descriptive of the unbridled abandonment of the ascendancy mind. The Chief Justice spoke of the traversers' counsel as the "gentlemen on the other side," and the Attorney-General challenged one of them in court. A former viceroy declared in the House of Lords that when he read the Chief Justice's charge he could not persuade himself that it was not a continuation of the Solicitor-General's speech for the prosecution. The jury found a verdict of guilty, as they were appointed to do. When the verdict was given, O'Connell whispered to a friend in court that he was thankful the Attorney-General had brought so trivial a charge, as he might with equal ease have convicted him of murder. The sentence was postponed until the next term, according to usage in such cases.

SECTION XI.

We must not miss the general flow of events in dwelling on the circumstances of this trial. O'Connell was working to obtain justice from the British Parliament, or the restoration of the Parliament of Ireland. The mass of his countrymen followed him implicitly, but with a constant and increasing development of a distinctive national spirit. One of the two great political parties in England was disposed to legislate justly for Ireland. The other was doggedly determined neither to act justly, nor to love mercy, nor to walk humbly. The door of escape that repeal offered to its victims it would have brought every soldier in the British dominions to guard, for the one simple reason that it was a door of escape. If O'Connell had a fair trial, a jury could not have been found that would find him guilty. The vital right of a country is to pronounce as to guilt or innocence of her children in political matters. The guilt or innocence does not turn on the particular facts given in evidence, but on the great general fact of the nation's will on the whole matter concerned. It is for this trial by jury exists. A short time before, during the reform struggle, the Government forbade by proclamation a meeting that had been announced in Birmingham. The people did not heed the proclamation, but held the meeting. The police charged the crowd with their bludgeons, and one of them got killed. The coroner's jury, contrary to the violent protests of the coroner, found a verdict of justifiable homicide. The Government quashed the verdict, and brought a man named Fursey to trial for murder at the Old Bailey. The jury listened calmly to the evidence, and insisted on finding the prisoner not guilty. The question they were trying was not whether Fursey had killed a policeman, but whether the people of England have a right to hold public meetings. The national conscience, through twelve constitutional representatives, could pronounce that the death of a man who assailed this right was not murder. In Ireland there had been no crime, no violation of law in any degree or to any extent, and yet the verdict was not left to the average judgment of Ireland or of the United Kingdom. It is most probable that if O'Connell had been tried in England, an ordinarily-constructed jury would not have convicted him. It is certain such a jury would not convict him in Ireland. We have, then, the fact that the Orange faction in Ireland, supported by a Tory Government in England, violated the constitutional law, and defied the free public opinion of the United Kingdom, to procure an iniquitous conviction. It might be argued that as the public have a right to protect their liberties by a discretionary verdict, so the Government of the country have a right and a duty to save the empire when in danger by an arbitrary adjustment of the machinery of law. The question need not be gone into whether a government possesses such a right, or can plead the constraint of such a duty, when the empire is in danger. No such case arose: the empire was not in danger. It is the ever-repeated instance of the high priests and rulers calling for an admittedly unjust judgment, on the plea that it was better one man should die than that the whole nation should perish. What they meant by the nation

perishing was the curtailment of their own usurped privileges, and the lowering of their Pharisaic pride. The Orangemen and the Tories cry out that the empire is being dismembered when their own craft is in danger. O'Connell was not seeking repeal, save as an alternative. He said this as he started the movement; he said it on every critical occasion; he acted on it whenever an opening offered. The ascendancy party in Ireland and England knew perfectly well that he was contending only for liberal institutions, the abolition of privilege, the equality of his country with England: this was to them the destruction of the country. The country and its institutions would be strengthened and preserved by the equal union O'Connell was striving for; but this kind of union would involve the humiliation of aristocratic pride, the admission of the people to equal privileges, the lowering of a caste, and the raising of a nation; and this to them was the dismemberment of the empire, to prevent which they preferred the dishonouring of institutions and the drowning of Ireland in blood. The infamy of O'Connell's conviction was incurred, not in support of the Union, but of injustice—not by the United Kingdom, but by the Orange-Tory faction. One judge throughout the trial dissented from the rest of the bench. This was Judge Perrin—a Liberal.

SECTION XII.

Immediately on the conclusion of the trial, O'Connell, at a committee meeting of the Repeal Association, proposed taking the step that was habitual with him on occasions resembling the present. He recommended the dissolution of the association, and its re-establishment in a modified form, and also the abandonment of the Arbitration Courts. But he was no longer absolute. The agitation had not for some time been carried on at his discretion. The literary element that had been largely infused into it, and had exposed it to misconception by the freedom of its utterances, produced an originality of views and an independence of opinion that while the tide was flowing were not very distinctly felt, but became instantly perceptible when a pause occurred. O'Connell's proposal was resisted, and a compromise was made. The editors of the newspapers withdrew from the association, saving it thus for the future from liability for their writings, and all connection with the Arbitration Courts was severed.

Parliament met on the 1st of February. The Whig leaders denounced the manner in which the conviction was obtained in the strongest terms. Lord John Russell, who introduced a motion on the state of Ireland, declared that in England the Government was a government of opinion; in Ireland it was notoriously a government of force. The traversers, he said, were charged with exciting ill-will in Ireland against England: was there not one in England (he meant Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst) who excited ill-will in England against Ireland? Macaulay showed how the Whigs alone had offered equitable government to Ireland, while others had depopulated and enslaved the country. Sir Thomas Wilde insisted that the indictment was a disgrace to law, the formation of the jury an act of dishonour, the verdict no verdict. It is not just or fair to contrast these Whig expressions with the subsequent conduct

of the same men. This subsequent conduct was not directed against a similar agitation. Let it be condemned by those who choose so to condemn it, as resistance to Irish independence; but it was not inconsistent with sentiments favourable to just and equal government, and expressions condemnatory of an iniquitous suppression, under legal forms, of an effort to obtain equal liberties for Englishmen and Irishmen. The Irish Attorney-General explained that the Roman Catholics were not struck off the jury because they were Roman Catholics, but because they were Repealers. But the charge was, not seeking to get repeal, but seeking to get it illegally. According to the Attorney-General, the wider was the demand for repeal, the easier it would be to convict Repealers, because the wider would be the power to challenge. O'Connell, who was received with unbounded applause, interpreted the demand for repeal. He cared little, he said, for what had passed on the late trial, if he could open the eyes of the wise and good in England to the real state of Ireland. He could never forget, and he would fully relate to his countrymen, the sympathy he had met with in England. But he had little hopes of justice. Why were not the franchises—why were not the corporate institutions of the two countries the same? The financial arrangements between them should be remodelled. A provision against absenteeism should be made. The land laws should be modified. Religious equality should be given. His anxiety was to see men act together like brothers, without distinction between English and Irish, Protestant and Catholic. This was the real matter at issue, as even the Ministerialists implied, for they all spoke as if they were defending, not the Union, but the Established Church and Protestant ascendancy. The motion was lost by a majority of 99.

There was no need of explanation between the people of England and O'Connell. They understood each other because their wants and aspirations were the same. He attended great meetings in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Coventry, and was everywhere enthusiastically welcomed. A dinner was then given in his honour in Covent Garden Theatre, to show "on the part of Englishmen their admiration of his constant advocacy of the rights of Irishmen."

The traversers received notice that they would be called up for judgment on the 12th of April. They replied by a motion for a new trial, on the ground of misdirection on the part of the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice presided when the motion was heard. Judge Perrin was of opinion that the verdict should be set aside. Judge Crampton thought there should be a new trial in the case of Mr. Tierney, the Catholic priest. Judge Burton refused a new trial, and so did the Chief Justice in his own defence. So two of the four judges were dissatisfied with the verdict. The Government got out of the difficulty by releasing Mr. Tierney. On Thursday, May 30, the traversers were called to receive sentence. They represented that they were appealing to the House of Lords, and that judgment should be postponed meanwhile. This plea was refused. A bill had been brought in by Lord Campbell, admitting to bail pending a writ of error, but Lord Lyndhurst opposed it because it would tell in favour of O'Connell.¹ The next year he introduced and passed it himself. Judge Burton pronounced sentence. O'Connell was

¹ Campbell's "Life of Lord Lyndhurst," p. 154.

sentenced to imprisonment for twelve months, fined two thousand pounds, and bound in two securities of five thousand pounds each, one of them personal, for good behaviour for seven years. The other traversers were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment, fined fifty pounds, and bound in two securities of one thousand pounds each. O'Connell had always in the vicissitudes of his career been equal to the occasion. To-day he was above it. "I will not do anything so irregular," he said, "as to reply to the Court, but I am entitled to remind Mr. Justice Burton that we each of us have sworn, and that I in particular have sworn positively, that I was not engaged in any conspiracy whatever. I am sorry to say that I feel it my imperative duty to add that justice has not been done to me." The junior bar raised a cheer for Repeal of the Union. It was caught up by the audience, swelled to a thunder peal as it reached the multitude outside, and died away in repeated reverberations in the distance. So stood Ireland, and so stood O'Connell, on the day of their intended humiliation.

SECTION XIII.

Peel's admirers regarded his imprisonment of O'Connell as a personal victory over a rival. "Sir Robert Peel," his biographer says, "had so managed as to destroy his baseless dream of empire by the unromantic and ludicrous instrumentality of an attorney. In all such affairs, to be ridiculous is worse than to be unfortunate. A man may be respectable even upon a scaffold; but no man can be so in a penitentiary, to which the pseudo-king of Ireland was now consigned."¹ The ascendancy press shouted with exultant mockery. It was simply the envious triumph of the coterie of a province. "Thank God, I am in gaol for Ireland!" said O'Connell on the evening of his incarceration. The leadership was entrusted to Smith O'Brien by O'Connell's express desire. It had been the Orange boast that when O'Connell was imprisoned the belief in his invulnerability would vanish, the rent would cease, and the agitation come to an end. But the mind of the nation was no longer millions of separate minds, each hanging on the lips of one man; it was a cemented and organised whole. The weekly attendance at the new Hall far exceeded its accommodation, and the repeal rent, which for the fourteen weeks before the imprisonment amounted to £6,679 12s. 6d., for the fourteen weeks that the imprisonment lasted reached the sum of £25,212 12s. 2d. If anyone said to a peasant, "O'Connell is in gaol," he would receive the constant and confident reply, "He will get out again."

On September the 2nd the writ of error came before the Lords. The arguments employed by the traversers' counsel were of a purely technical kind. The opinions of the English judges, as is usual on those occasions, were sought. Seven of them, Tories, were of opinion that two of the counts were bad in law, as was also the finding of the jury on four counts, but that if the finding on one count was good the judgment must stand. With regard to the jurors' list, the sheriff was not charged with connivance, and on this ground only could the array

¹ Doubleday's "Life of Peel," vol. II., p. 367.

be legally challenged. Two justices, Parke and Coltman, Liberals, differed from the other seven. On the 4th the House of Lords met as a Court of Appeal, to make their final decision. It consisted of Lords Lyndhurst, Brougham, Cottenham, Campbell, and Denman. Lord Lyndhurst was for affirming the judgment. An appeal to the House of Lords, he said, was not the proper remedy for an imperfect jurors' list. Lord Brougham admitted the informality of some counts, but as seven judges had decided for and only two against the judgment, it must hold good. All this reads, to the outer world, like an algebraic equation, in which, if an error were made, it would affect questions of right and wrong on grounds totally independent of right and wrong. Lord Denman looked at the matter involved, and not at the meaningless symbols. He said that if jury lists could be mutilated, as in this case, trial by jury would become a mockery, a delusion, and a snare. The challenge of the array should have been allowed, and, not having been allowed, the trial should not have proceeded. Lords Cottenham and Campbell decided on the technicalities, but on obvious common-sense grounds, that the judgment was bad. So by a majority of three Liberal judges, against two Tories, O'Connell and his companions were declared to be unjustly sentenced, after they had been three months in prison. The defence had cost £50,000. The lay lords had a right to vote if they insisted on it. Several of them—Lord Hawarden, a notorious evictor, in particular—were resolved to exercise their privilege. The Ministry, in fact, had summoned their regular majority for the purpose. But the Duke of Wellington sent Lord Wharncliffe to prevent so great a scandal.¹ Nevertheless, when the question was put, some lay lords voted, and the Lord Chancellor was forced to put the question three times before the decision was left to the law lords. Lord Lyndhurst made an attempt to deceive the solicitors of the traversers, and postpone the decision, when he saw what its nature was to be.² Lord Brougham delivered his own opinion with unjudicial asperity, and when the judgment was reversed he was actually in a furious rage.³ O'Connell replied to some of Brougham's anti-Irish speeches by a suggestion that he should take the pledge. A ferocious leader appeared in the *Times*, asserting that O'Connell could know nothing of Lord Brougham's habits, as he was never admitted to the tables where he dined. Such are the rivalries of the gods. Some said that O'Connell's spirit was broken by his condemnation. Disraeli gave it as his opinion that Peel never recovered the blow of his deliverance.⁴ The decision of the Lords threw the nation into a delirium of anticipated triumph. The late prisoners were escorted to Merriion Square, O'Connell's residence, by a procession of two hundred thousand persons.

SECTION XIV.

Meantime the national movement had been developing in two divergent directions. O'Connell and his immediate followers were strengthened

¹ "Memoirs of Lord Denman," vol. II., p. 191.

² O'Rourke's "Life of O'Connell," p. 263.

³ Campbell's "Life of Lord Brougham," p. 530.

⁴ "Life of Lord G. Bentinck," p. 94.

in their inclination to Parliamentary redress by the late event. The Young Irelanders were spreading, but at the same time might be said to be dissipating, their views. The *Nation* newspaper loaded the air with winged seeds of thought. Repeal reading-rooms were multiplied throughout the land. But real progress could not be measured by literary tastes and associations. Sentimental theories of nationality were promulgated that produced no amalgamation of political aims, satisfied no national aspirations, could find no efficient constituencies. Heterogeneous combinations were taking place, and an increase of intellectual and social intercourse was mistaken for the solid union of a nation. Some literary friends of the Young Irelanders were bitter enemies of O'Connell. Various modifications of national self-government began to be proposed. In Belfast a federal party commenced organising itself. Dr. Maunsell made a motion in the Dublin Corporation, praying the Queen to hold her Court and Parliament once every three years in Dublin. Mr. Grey Porter proposed a congress for the empire, and local legislatures for the three kingdoms. Those were the plans of the educated classes. The great mass of the people were prepared to abide by O'Connell, and the clergy must go with the people. No policy was practical unless adopted by him. But the entire number of those who felt patriotic instincts did not, as formerly, respond to his will. Many of the new combinations were suckers, not branches. He made a tentative declaration in favour of federalism. Duffy, though he and his friends were in communication with the Federalists, and were endeavouring to unite with them and promote their views, remonstrated with O'Connell in a published letter. All the inimical press broke out into an ecstasy of joy at O'Connell's surrender of repeal and the divisions in the national camp. The surrender, as they supposed it, would have given them little pleasure without the divisions. The chief of the Federalists, Mr. Sharman Crawford, an able and earnest man, but an unforgiving opponent of O'Connell's, on other grounds, rejected the proffered juncture, and O'Connell returned to his former position. The federal idea, in fact, was conceived as much in rivalry of O'Connell as in love of Ireland. Its promoters preferred to see it perish to its success by his aid. Federalism or repeal would equally suit his purpose in raising a cry and forming a party that would compel or persuade the Government to deal just legislation to Ireland. Another element of discord was working in silence. The Irish nation that was contending with England was in fact the Roman Catholic community. All the disabilities and wrongs which Ireland had suffered, she suffered in the persons of her Catholic children. It was in her Catholic aspect that Ireland was rack-rented, unenfranchised, evicted, police-trodden, and despised. The spur to Protestant nationality was shame and indignation at being tempted into persecution of their countrymen, and becoming sharers in their subjection, by the offer of an unjust ascendancy. There were two ways in which freedom might be obtained—by the whole nation becoming Protestant or regardless of sectarian differences, or by the Protestants, as Protestants, joining the Catholics, as Catholics, in their contest. The first plan would be a total surrender of the principle of religious liberty, for which the fight had hitherto been carried on. For men who were contending for religious

freedom to give up their religion, would be giving up freedom as well, for it would be an acceptance of freedom only on conditions. The second method was the only feasible one. Protestants and Catholics might hold their religious convictions with mutual toleration, and unite under a common flag of nationality to achieve a common freedom. The Young Irelanders were in favour of forgetting and disowning religious differences. But this ignoring of differences looked like indifference. It sometimes went further. O'Connell, whose mind mingled with every subject it took up, so that nothing was superficial to it, and who was therefore a man of deep and sincere religious feeling, had spoken of the reversal of the State trial verdict as providential or miraculous. This is an opinion on which persons of a reverential habit will look with respect, if not with sympathy. They will even be forced to assume that such expression of belief, made without any apparent worldly motives, is sincere. Some of the Young Irelanders made merry, and became even scornful, over O'Connell's claim to superhuman protection for his country's cause. There are traces of disrespect, and even of contempt, unconcealed and assumed to be justifiable, towards the Irish leader to be seen in some later publications of his younger rivals. This, it may be, is natural, but it is not exactly pardonable. No man, it is said, is heroic to those before whom the privacy of his life is apparent. O'Connell's whole life was spent in the glare of publicity. The world in a sense waited on him, and was familiar with him at all times. He had no seasons of retirement, or rest, or illness, during which imagination might depict him in attitudes of peace or reflection. He was always in the field. His mental resources were so abundant and so ready that they required no replenishment or preparation, and feared no extravagance of expenditure. And so he continued to the last. Men saw him in all his moods. He was regarded with a keener jealousy by those who condemned his methods as obsolete, and aspired to places of greater activity in their country's service, to which he blocked their way, because he excelled them in the attributes of youth, and could work continuously for his policy, while they could only work at intervals for theirs. Two generations, in fact, came into collision without the softening weakness of age on the one side, or of youth on the other. Old Ireland did not grow old, and Young Ireland was stung into premature adulthood by the unprecedented provocations of circumstance. And the latitudinarian Liberalism to which the age is tending could not agree with the surviving championship of orthodoxy. The Young Ireland press exposed itself to suspicion. The *Nation* got into a controversy with the *Dublin Review*. It may be unquestionable that the Young Irelanders were thoroughly sincere in their religious professions, but in this particular instance it was not a pure conscience, but an outward recognition of the right of Roman Catholics to protect their own creed and obey their own authorities, that was required. Whispers of infidelity were circulated, and the agitated reeds spoke the secret aloud. John O'Connell, the leader's favourite son, who took most share in his father's work, and was already appointed by popular favour as his successor, is supposed to have been foremost in the causes of dissension. It was his personal interest to be recognised as the defender of Catholicism,

and he was jealous of the superior abilities of the growing school of thought. Personal jealousies were at work, but there is a right and a wrong even under personal jealousies. Davis was the soul of his party, and it was in connection with his name that rumour was busy. It is impossible to say how far these beginnings of discord were encouraged by secret agencies. Davis wrote a letter of remonstrance to O'Connell, and it was replied to by him in a communication in which he solemnly declares that neither he nor his son were in any way connected with attacks on the *Nation*. This letter was detained in the post office for several weeks before delivery. But these small disputes did not in the slightest degree affect O'Connell's supremacy or the triumphant progress of the repeal cause.

SECTION XV.

A report now got abroad that the Government were negotiating with the Pope with the view of withdrawing the Irish bishops and the priests from all political action. This proved to be so far true as that the Prefect of the Propaganda had written to Archbishop Crolly, directing him to counsel the Irish ecclesiastics to confine themselves to their spiritual duties. The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland was here put to the test. There were two opposite claims made out—one Papal, the other national. O'Connell, in a letter to the Bishop of Meath, and Mr. O'Neill Daunt in the association, protested against this attempted interference with the liberties of the clergy, and the clergy themselves as a body declined to regard the Prefect's letter as furnishing a cause for discontinuing their connection with the Repeal Association. Peel had devised a general scheme for the pacification of Ireland, in which the expulsion of the clergy from active participation in politics, by command of the Pope, was meant to be a chief factor. In spite of repeated proofs to the contrary, he believed, as was believed before him, and has been believed after him, that the priests lead the people in politics. He concluded, therefore, that if he could detach the priests from O'Connell the cry for repeal would be at an end. In order to reconcile the Church to the mandate from Rome, the Maynooth grant was augmented from £9,000 to £26,000, and from being an annual donation was changed to a permanent endowment. The next step was a measure for the creation of middle-class colleges, in which the young men of the two creeds would be trained up together in secular knowledge on terms of perfect equality. Religious teaching was only so far provided for as afforded facilities for separate instruction under voluntary enterprise. It was proposed to establish three colleges in the south, west, and north of Ireland. The Crown, in the first instance, was to have the appointment of professors. Advances of this kind had always been regarded with suspicion. The project of endowing the Catholic clergy had been proposed, and was resisted on the ground that it would lower their zeal and activity, by making them independent of their flocks. It would also make them dependent on Government. Why the Maynooth grant was so largely increased, and multiplied facilities were thus afforded for disseminating unsophisticated Catholicism, with the

clear knowledge, from the very acceptance of the gift, that this would be the effect—for had it been otherwise the offer would have been declined—cannot be explained save by looking at it as a temporary expedient of statesmanship. An attempt to confine Catholic clergymen to their spiritual duties, the bestowal of a large income for the propagation of Catholicism, and a measure intended to allay the antagonism of the Catholic to the Protestant and of the Protestant to the Catholic, could not be made consistently with each other, though they might be with the hope of immediate repose. It was also known that a similar attempt had been made in elementary education, and had signally failed. These are the inconsistencies to which a nation is driven which undertakes to legislate for another nation. Sir Robert Inglis, the champion of Protestantism, pronounced the institution of the Queen's Colleges to be a gigantic scheme of godless education. O'Connell adopted and echoed the phrase. The Protestant objections were that mixed college education would liberalise both creeds and level down the antipathies on which Protestant ascendancy rested. That the Catholic Church should get a better worldly position would be an encroachment on the monopoly of Protestant pride not to be tolerated, even though it was obtained through a course that blunted the zeal and power of that Church. The Protestants preferred the contrast of their dignity and refinement with what they considered the vulgarity and bigotry of the Catholics, to a community of Protestants and Catholics of equal culture and mitigated pretensions. O'Connell condemned the colleges because he was not willing that the dissolution of Protestant ascendancy should be purchased by the sacrifice of Catholic orthodoxy. There is no need to pronounce whether his decision on the religious bearing of the subject was right or wrong. His own conscience in that province should alone be the judge. But if by religious freedom is meant the right of Ireland to profess and practise and preserve Catholicism, unshackled and unimpaired, beyond question he was politically right. And even on morally religious grounds his conduct is not without somewhat to recommend it. Irish Protestantism, in its determination to hold nothing in common with Popery, in its purpose to create as wide a distance as possible in thought and feeling between itself and a community with which it was in daily contact, had rushed to two opposite extremities of the compass. Professing a religion whose essence is love, whose purity is visiting the afflicted, whose proof is doing deeds of goodness grown into such an unconscious habit that it forgets its restoration, and acts from the instinct of its original nature—professing such a religion, it has devised Orangeism, whose inspiration is political hate, and a group of sects that resemble the fragments of a shattered planet, bound together only by a common doctrinal abjuration of morality and virtue. It has descended to hell to gather zeal at its fires, and soared to heaven to escape the duties of earth. To move the world of Romanism from its place, it has on one side planted its lever on vacuity, on the other on the thundercloud. Protesting against a form of Christianity which in many of its institutions is true to its origin, and is a protest against worldliness, it consistently acts as if Christ had accepted the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,

and had them to bestow on His followers. It has gone far to make the religion of England a mere name, and by so doing has alienated the common-sense of the multitude. This kind of religion is always seen through and ridiculed by the young, until they learn its secular advantages in advanced life. The Roman Catholics might well be unwilling to expose their youth to the danger of such a companionship, recommended as it would be by social attractions which even to their elders were often irresistible. A difference of views could not but arise here between O'Connell and the Young Irelanders. They were in favour of the new scheme. Some of the foremost of them were Protestants. O'Connell declared that he would abandon his opposition if the bishops did not think with him. The bishops met in conference, and resolved to accept the bill on condition that a fair proportion of the professors were Catholics; that a board of trustees, of which bishops of the provinces should be members, should have power to remove any officer who tampered with faith or morals; and that a Catholic chaplain should in each college superintend the religious instruction of Catholic students. If those concessions were not made, they considered the bill dangerous and inadmissible. This decision left the dispute open. Then the Archbishop of Tuam wrote a letter to Sir Robert Peel condemning the bill. The bishops again met, but came to no decision. The Ministry made no substantial concession of any kind, and the bill became law. All the bishops finally withdrew their support, under instructions from the Propaganda.

SECTION XVI.

At this time a dispute with America seemed imminent respecting the Oregon territory. Peel expressly declared that England could more resolutely defend her rights because she had sent a message of peace to Ireland. This consideration did not prevent the Orange party from opposing the Maynooth grant and frustrating the intended effect, so far as they could. They preferred the maintenance of their solitary ascendancy to the integrity of the nation. The Rev. Hugh McNeill, at a conference held on the 13th of April, recommended their representatives to avail themselves of the forms of the House in order to defeat the Maynooth project. He could not understand why those forms existed if they never were to be made use of. He had no hesitation in expressing a hope that their friends in Parliament would avail themselves of the power which they offered of obstructing the progress of the Maynooth measure. Macaulay, speaking on the subject of the grant, justly complained that measures of conciliation should come from men whose days had been spent in rousing the passions they now sought to assuage; and he needlessly added that there was a limit to these concessions. "What, let me ask you," he said, "is to be the end of a system which yields nothing to reason and humanity, and which grants everything to agitation and threats? Where will you, the Government, stop short if you are found thus constantly paltering with agitation? I defy you to say that the late Government ever brought forward any measure with respect to Ireland which was not strictly conformable to their principles.

You may, therefore, trust to our assertions when we tell you the point at which we will stop short in this career of concessions . . . We think, and we now state publicly, that a Repeal of the Union would be fatal to this great country, and we never will consent to it: no, not even were we again menaced by the combined hostilities of Spain, of France, and of America: no, never—not even though a second Napoleon were to menace us with another camp of invasion at Boulogne: no, never—until every chance had been staked and lost; never—until England has lost her place among the nations of earth.” This is obviously the language of party jealousy. Sir James Graham, of course, responded to the challenge, and echoed its sentiment. A visit of the Queen to Ireland was in contemplation at this time, and an understanding had been come to with O’Connell that politics were to be remitted during her stay. O’Connell now withdrew from this agreement. “Repeal is looking up,” wrote the *Times*; “there is no denying the broad fact. Concession has made its advocates more rampant than ever, and all hopes of a royal visit must be suspended for another year at least, if not *sine die*.” Such was the immediate effect of Macaulay’s speech. The utterance of such language places Ireland and Irishmen in a position of intolerable ignominy, and takes the discussion out of the region of justice and reason and interest, and leaves it at the sole discretion of pride. It is exactly the language that the Southern slaveowners would employ in the defence of their cherished institution. It was not the abolition of slavery they so much feared, as the thought that they would be lowered in the sight of their neighbours if it were abolished. They would no longer hold their place among States. Slavery’s bitter draught would not be more palatable to the slaves by thus being told that it increased the status and position of their masters. It would be inconceivably false, and more than foolish, to describe the compelled subjection of Ireland as being necessary to England’s real greatness; and how can it be expected of Irishmen to be content to see their country afflicted and maddened, and to leave her so, for no other object than that England may rest her greatness on a false basis? One Irish newspaper, replying to Macaulay, said that it was not the death of England that was in question, but the life of Ireland. Another retorted that, in the circumstances supposed by the orator, there would be no need to ask for consent to repeal, and that once Ireland was agreed upon the subject, England must agree. Macaulay had no real conviction on the subject of repeal. His feeling or passion was the reflex result of his own oratory, and that was at the service of his party. But the mischief created by making the defiance of a nation’s hopes the topic of a declamation may be read in Smith O’Brien’s reply: “I tell Mr. Macaulay,” he said, speaking in Ireland, “that if the contingencies which he contemplates were to happen, it would be too late to negotiate with the people of Ireland. I tell him that if fifty thousand French stood on the strand of Normandy, ready to pass over by steam to the undefended shores of Britain; if an American fleet swept the Irish Channel, and carried on board regiments of Irish emigrants, enrolled, armed, and disciplined, ready to land on Irish soil to defend the rights of their native land; if the Irish soldiers in the British army, forming

one-third of that entire force, should refuse, as I believe they unquestionably would refuse, to shed the blood of their fellow-countrymen ; if one million of the natives of Ireland resident in England and Scotland were prepared, as I am of opinion they would be prepared, to co-operate with the firm resolve of the people of this country—if such a state of things should come to pass, why, then the consummation which Mr. Macaulay appears to contemplate would take place—the British empire would be broken up, and thenceforward the history of Ireland would be written as that of a separate and independent country.” Mr. Macaulay, as a Scotchman, was bidding for favour against Ireland ; and as Whig, against the Tories. He knew, and everyone knew, that this bravado of emulous patriotism rested all its force on the continuance of Irish disunion. Irishmen naturally replied : You insult us because we are divided, and because you think you can keep us divided. If we were united your words would be of no value ; and when we are united their vanity will be proved. In this very debate Sir James Graham was called on to retract a declaration he had previously made that “concession to Ireland had reached its utmost limits.” He replied that he had used that expression in the debate on the Arms Bill. “I do not think it,” he continued “quite fair to fasten upon a particular expression used by any member in the course of a debate, especially when an explanation has been offered, and that explanation I hold in my hand, which was offered within a fortnight from the use of the expression itself. But I will do more. I will not only admit that expression, but I will also avow my regret at having used it. I say that when the feelings and the interests of a nation are concerned, even an inadvertence of a Minister of State becomes a serious matter. I, therefore, now make this reparation fully and freely. I am sorry that I used that expression. If I have given offence to Ireland I deeply regret it, and I can only say from the very depth of my heart that my actions have been better than my words.” So easily are threats of finality uttered and withdrawn.

In the debate on the Address, on the opening of Parliament in 1845, Lord John Russell alluded to the circumstance that the plan of academical education in Ireland had led Mr Gladstone to leave the Ministry. Mr. Gladstone said that he had written a work on the subject of the relations of a Christian State in its alliance with a Christian Church, and that he had a strong conviction that those who had borne solemn testimony on great constitutional questions ought not to be parties to proposing a material departure from them.

SECTION XVII.

The Ministry in 1843 had instituted a commission known as the Devon Commission, from its chairman, the Earl of Devon, to inquire into the condition of Ireland with reference to the tenure of land. In 1844 it issued its report. The commissioners were all landlords. The report says and unsays a great deal, and leaves the inference that the existing landlord system, prudently worked, would redress every inconvenience, and remove all suffering. Landlords in too many instances adopted the

clearance system, but the object was to increase the size of the holdings, and this step was called for by a due regard to the interests both of landlord and tenant. There was no need of a provision against landlords again increasing the number of holdings when it suited their wants, and again effecting clearances and consolidating their farms when policy required it. It would be impossible, the report says, to convey an idea of the distress to which the ejected tenantry have been reduced, but there has been much of exaggeration and mis-statement in the sweeping charges against Irish landlords, and the evil arises from the abuse of a right of which the existence is essential to the maintenance of property. Tenancy-at-will generally prevails, and it is better it should not be so, but the commissioners feel that this is one of the points that must be left to the discretion of individuals. Uncertainty of tenure is constantly complained of as a pressing grievance by all classes of tenants, but probably the complaint is put forward by some as an excuse for indolence and neglect. A custom of striking peculiarity prevails in the northern counties, called the tenant-right. This right was saleable, and as much as fifteen years' purchase on the rent was commonly given for it. The districts where it prevails thrive and prosper in comparison with other parts of the country, and no interference with it by law is recommended. But it is expected that by an improved intercourse between landlord and tenant its evils will be avoided and its form modified. With regard to improvements made by tenants, they seem to apprehend that a custom similar to tenant-right may extend and become established if the tenant's remuneration was left to voluntary agreement, so a legislative measure is thought best to give efficacy to such agreement. They find that in Tipperary cold-blooded murders are committed by ejected tenants. "The whole nature of Christian men appears in such cases to be changed, and the one absorbing feeling as to the possession of land stifles all others and extinguishes the plainest principles of humanity." Such is the charge brought against Irish tenants by Irish landlords—the one absorbing feeling as to the possession of land extinguishes their principles of humanity. The universal long-spoken complaint is that the Irish landlord's unnatural, artificial, and unfounded notion of his absolute right with regard to land has lifted him above all consideration of the occupier's claims and sufferings. The inhumanity of the evicted tenant is the faint reverberation from the inhumanity of the landlord—the "absorbing feeling" in the one case being the necessities of life, in the other the pride of social status. Changes must be made, the gist of the report implies, but a humane landlord will know where to stop. What class of people in earth's history have been left to the humanity of another class and found mercy? When slaves were in the power of their owners, or captives of their captors, did they find mercy? When debtors were in the power of creditors, did they find mercy? When men and children were left to the humanity of their employers in factories, did they find mercy? In 1845 Lord Stanley proposed a bill for "Compensation of Tenants in Ireland." It granted compensation in case of ejectment for drains and farm buildings, and abolished tenant-right. It contemplated the removal of a vast amount of labour from its present field, and would employ a part of it on the waste

lands of Ireland. A storm of opposition arose from the tenants whose rights it would rob them of, and from the landlords whose waste lands it presumed to interfere with, and swept away the bill. Lord Stanley, when he became Lord Derby, sold his Irish estates.

Confiding in the resources of the nation and in the plenitude of his legitimate strength, O'Connell was able to reject assistance from quarters that would throw doubt on his loyalty. Whatever he did was done under the shelter of the British Constitution. He had said that he would abandon repeal rather than owe it to France. In preference to gaining repeal by American aid he said he would rather win it by helping England in "bringing down the American eagle in its highest pride of flight." He spoke and wrote strongly against American slavery, and offended a Southern State by sending back, with contumelious words, some money that had been sent by it in aid of the repeal exchequer. He indignantly and publicly, at a meeting of the association, declined to accept a copy of his own "Memoir of Ireland," printed in America, and magnificently bound, from the editor of an American newspaper, because he was an advocate of negro slavery.

On the anniversary of their imprisonment the State prisoners held a levée in the Rotunda, when O'Connell and his late fellow-prisoners, standing on an elevated dais, and surrounded by the principal members of the National party, received the felicitations of an organised nation. Deputations from the municipalities, commissioners, guardians, associated trades, clergy, and others were presented, thanking them for their past fidelity and promising to work with them to the end. A pledge was proposed by Smith O'Brien, and seconded by Henry Grattan, declaring that the men assembled would never cease seeking repeal of the Union by all peaceful and constitutional means till a native parliament was restored. No such popular display was ever seen in that building. O'Connell, speaking in Sligo, said that in the next Parliament he expected to have seventy repeal members.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FAMINE.

SECTION I.

MEANTIME the repeal agitation was going on with unabated vigour. There was no diminution of organised enthusiasm, no abandonment of meetings, no falling off, no disloyalty to O'Connell. On the 8th of June a demonstration took place in Cork, consisting of the Mayor and Corporation, all the trades, each with its band, and an immense concourse of people. The total numbers were computed at half a million. One feature in the pageant illustrates the pacific character of the movement. On a high platform, drawn by four bay horses and driven by postillions with bright yellow uniforms and green velvet caps, sat a venerable minstrel, under the shade of an ivied and branching oak. His beard hung over his bosom, and his grey hairs floated on his shoulders from beneath his lofty conical cap, ornamented with a golden representation of a harp; under his long green mantle, which was fastened on his breast by a sceptre-form bodkin or brooch, was visible a long yellow tunic, encircled by a dark belt and silver buckle, the nether garment of a buff colour, with red-taped sandals. He held in his hands the harp that had been played on before O'Connell, at Tara, on August the 15th, 1843, from which he elicited, ever and anon, the most beautiful strains of his native mountains. On the same car were pages, an ancient Irish chieftain, and two Irish knights. O'Connell arrived at a quarter before one, and such was the extent of the line that it was half-past four before the triumphal car on which he sat could proceed.¹ On September the 26th a meeting was held at Thurles, which was attended by at least two hundred thousand persons. The men were well clad, and presented an appearance of comfort and content. The women were decked in their Sunday best, and an immense mass of stout small farmers, with a sprinkling of squireens, gave the meeting an appearance of respectability, in which many of the meetings of 1843 were deficient. About three o'clock O'Connell entered the town from the Cashel Road, which for three or four miles presented one dense array of horsemen, footmen, flags and waving banners, moving slowly along the sinuosities of the way.² So were the two countries engaged towards the close of 1845, Ireland demanding a national legislature as the indispensable condition to her prosperity and her contentment, parading the emblems of her ancient civilisation, and practising the forms of her coveted independence; England, by deed and word, by legislative activity and verbal asseveration, expressing her belief that she could do more for Ireland than Ireland could do for herself, and that by maintaining the Union she was saving her from destruction.

¹ Ann. Reg. ² Ann. Reg.

Then the famine came and tested the sincerity of both nations, as nations had never been tested before. There are those who charge the English Ministry with having deliberately and intentionally made use of the famine for the purpose of carrying out the long-avowed policy of thinning the Irish population. The Ministry wished the population of Ireland to be diminished. The country lay absolutely in their power during the famine, and the population was diminished beyond historical precedent. Those are the facts. But while they offer an excuse for angry impeachment they do not prove intentions. Between flinging a man into a river in whose death we have an interest, and dragging him out by a heroic impulse when he has fallen in accidentally, there is a wide field for every form of self-deception,—the pause of surprised egotism, the conflict of motives, the fight with temptations, the hesitation of mistrust, that brings about the end as fatally as if it were the result of a single act. There are few men who would like to be placed in such circumstances as that their enemy should perish or not, as they secretly desired. It is not the fear that they would commit murder from which they would shrink, but the thought of what might happen while they were calculating possibilities and consequences. Ministers are only men, and the great empire of England, with its armies on every continent and its navies on every sea, and its colonies in every climate, and its noble literature, and its glorious progress, and its grandly unfolding freedom, in its governmental contact with Ireland dwindles to a Minister, and he often a hostile one. The spirit of the nation gives place to the infirmities of a man. No nation should assume the responsibility which England held towards Ireland in the famine years; no nation should submit to be in the state of dependence in which Ireland was on England at that period. And whatever was the accountability of the governing country for the losses that were suffered, there is no doubt, in the least degree, but that the famine was the direct and natural result of English rule. The distress was felt in England and Scotland at the same time, but not to nearly the same extent as in Ireland. The same cause produced it in the three countries. This cause was modified in England and Scotland by other agencies. It had long acted unchecked and unqualified in Ireland, supported by English law and English soldiers, and when the famine came it enjoyed a saturnalia, it raged like a conflagration, it spread like a deluge. Ireland produced corn, cattle, and potatoes. Under the land system, as maintained in Ireland by England, the corn and cattle went to pay rent, and the potatoes remained as the people's food. Landlordism had absolute power and infinite resources. In the early days of conquest, money rents were unknown: there was a rude estimate that if the serf was to labour he must be fed. Nothing was to be got by starving him. But under modern landlordism, the less the tenant eats the more rent the landlord receives; and so in Ireland, under the admitted sanction of political economy, the landlord, having unlimited power of ejection, let his lands to any tenant who would pay more rent and be satisfied with less and inferior food, until potatoes became the sole sustenance of the people. But there are some potatoes that are wholesomer, and more nutritious, and require a more expensive culture than others, and there are others

that are very productive, and so require less land to be grown in, and are unwholesome and unnutritious in the same proportion. The rent would be increased if the people lived on the more productive and less nutritious plant; and so they were reduced to live on it. The landlord's pressure never ceased till the food of the tenant became a tasteless and watery species of potato, known as the white potato. It was a common saying at the time, that if people could live on turnips, to that they must come. It is as certain as any supposable event, that if the people could be got to live on the stalks, that is if the stalks were found to support them, the roots would go with the corn and cattle to increase the rent. But at this stage, Providence intervened. Man might bear this strain, Nature would not bear it. Mother Earth refused to see her own children pine and toil, while all the produce of her bounteous bosom went to the stranger, and prepared to take them to herself. The potato crop failed.

SECTION II.

If Ireland possessed a native parliament, the national resources would have been applied to meet the nation's wants. If there had been a real and just union with England, the resources of the United Kingdom would have been distributed as local necessities required. Heaven presented the English Ministry with an occasion of illustrating the Union as sincere and equal from the English side. The time had come to test England's declaration, that she held Ireland only to save her from herself. The friends of the Union might have been furnished for ever with an argument in England's considerate care for her suffering sister. The people of Ireland suggested the very measures which, if adopted, would have told against their demands for independence in after years. Their suggestion explained what they had been saying in their secret souls, while repeal had been on their lips. They had hitherto spoken in the pride of coveted nationality. God now put them to the torture, and they spoke the very truth. They did not whine for alms, or offer to die as irreconcilable enemies. They asked for employment, and the application of their own resources to their own necessities.

The potato blight was first noticed in Ireland about the middle of September, 1845. It had been known for some years as a visitor in America and in parts of Europe, but when it came to Ireland, finding there the potato in its most degenerate form, it settled on the land. It spread with alarming rapidity, and numerous letters in the public press gave terrified warning of the calamity that impended. The Royal "Agricultural Improvement Society of Ireland" held a special meeting, and advised that the attention of the Government should be directed to the fact that a great portion of the potato crop was affected by disease. The Dublin Corporation appointed a committee, which met on the 28th of October. At this meeting O'Connell said that the calamity was not a local but a national one, and must be met by national measures and resources. "By a merciful dispensation of Providence there was one of the best oat crops that we ever had in this country, but that crop was passing out of Ireland every day." Sixteen thousand quarters of oats, he said, had been exported from Ireland to London in one week. He

proposed that a deputation should wait on the Viceroy (Lord Heytesbury) to urge that distillation and brewing should be stopped, that the export of provisions of every kind should be prohibited, and our ports opened to receive provisions from all countries, and that public works should be set on foot, by a loan on the proceeds of the Irish woods and forests, and an absentee tax. The deputation waited on the Viceroy on the 3rd of November, and were very coldly received by him. In his reply he said that the Government were making inquiries, and that there was no immediate pressure in the market. It appears that this latter statement was found fault with by Sir Robert Peel, and it is significant, as illustrating Peel's ruling idea at the time, that it did not support his intentions concerning free trade. The Viceroy excused his statement by saying that it was made in reply to the demand that the exportation of grain should be prohibited.¹ When the Viceroy had read his reply to the deputation, he immediately commenced bowing them out. As they were about to withdraw, O'Connell called attention to the advisability of prohibiting distillation. Lord Heytesbury, pretending not to know who the speaker was, said that the observation of *the gentleman who had spoken* was one deserving of much consideration, and that it had not been overlooked by the Government. He then peremptorily bowed out the deputation. It is to be noted that the country was quite dependent on Government, and could do nothing for itself; all its powers and resources had been removed to London. This is the meaning of the Irish situation with regard to England. The only thing the country could attempt would be to prevent the exportation of corn by force. But this was out of their power. The forces arrayed against them were too great. English government in Ireland resolved itself into handcuffing the nation while the food on which their lives depended was taken away. A people unaccustomed to the management of their own affairs are utterly helpless when an emergency arises. The whole accountability is then thrown on the Government. The popular party could organise, and hold meetings to devise methods, and to obtain subscriptions, but the upper classes looked on their efforts as little better than repeal meetings; as meetings, in fact, for the preservation of the people, and in that they felt no interest. Their desire was to get rid of the people. The Orange press constantly asserted that the accounts of the blight were greatly exaggerated. The *Evening Mail*, on the 3rd of November, writing about a murder, "inclines to believe that the agrarian outrage had its origin in a design to intimidate landlords from demanding their rents at a season when corn of all kinds is superabundant, and the partial failure of the potato crop gives a pretence for not selling it. And if we recollect that the potato crop of the year far exceeded an average one, and that corn of all kinds is so far abundant, it will be seen that the apprehensions of a famine in that quarter are unfounded, and are merely made the pretence for withholding the payment of rent." Such was the language of the Tory and landlord newspaper. Its first and only consideration, for which every right must give way, and every wrong be said and done, was rent.

¹ "Memoirs of Sir R. Peel," part iii., p. 166.

SECTION III.

On the first appearance of danger, Peel sent Drs. Lindley and Playfair to Ireland to investigate and report on the subject. On the 1st of November he brought the Irish famine before a meeting of the Cabinet. He used it as an introduction to the repeal of the corn laws. "Can we vote public money," he asked, "for the sustenance of any considerable portion of the people on account of actual or apprehended scarcity, and maintain in full operation the existing restrictions on the free import of grain? I am bound to say my impression is that we cannot." He then gave instances of other countries which were opening their ports for foreign grain, and prohibiting the exportation of their own. Now when Peel laid such stress on the Irish famine, he might deceive himself into supposing that his interest and anxiety were independently exercised on behalf of Ireland. If we have a personal and a general motive for any act we do, we give the whole credit to the general motive, and in the series of succeeding events we carry out the personal motive, relying on our assumed disinterestedness. When Peel quoted other countries, as Belgium, Hungary, and Switzerland, which were at the time preventing the export of their produce, to prevent famine, it must have occurred to him that Ireland, if she were to be saved from famine, must be treated as if she were an independent nation, and that the English government should do for her what Belgium was doing for herself. He must have known that the exportations of produce from Ireland to England would as effectually lead to the starvation of Ireland, as the exportation of produce from Belgium to any part of the world would expose Belgium to want. But to argue so would be bringing the Union into question, imagining the death of the Union; and, as this would be the worst kind of treason, the thought thus suggested must be silenced and put out of sight. This is the way men act in their private concerns, and so they act in affairs of State. The Cabinet met again on the 6th, and Peel made a proposal for modifying the existing corn laws, which was not accepted by his colleagues. The subject was debated at subsequent meetings, always enforced by Peel with reference to Ireland, until December the 5th, when, finding that he was not sufficiently supported in his views, he resigned, and the Queen sent for Russell.

At the next meeting of the Repeal Association a letter was read from O'Brien, in which he expressed the hope that if the Whigs came into power they would not be permitted to effect by corruption what the Tories had failed to effect by coercion. O'Connell agreed with this letter, and moved its insertion on the minutes, but went on to say that if several measures which he specified—the repeal of the corn laws, an act to hold the committees on Irish railways in Dublin instead of London, an act for the improvement of tenure of land, and the restoration of the dismissed magistrates—were effected, the Irish support would be given to Lord John Russell. O'Connell never imagined the separation of England and Ireland even in the enjoyment of special privileges. Repeal with him was a policy, not a sentiment. He would take it by instalments, because he regarded it as a measure of practical advantages

each of which was acceptable in itself. He concluded by saying that until permanent and effectual redress was given repeal was to be demanded. The English Whig press welcomed this speech. The *Sun* declared that Lord John Russell could now form a Government, and the *Globe* predicted that in twelve months repeal would be a thing of the past. Russell failed in forming a government, and Peel returned to office accompanied by all his late colleagues except Stanley, who was succeeded in the Colonial Office by Gladstone.

SECTION IV.

The Queen opened Parliament in person on the 19th of January, 1846. In the Royal Speech regret is expressed at the frequent instances of crime lately committed in Ireland, and measures are recommended calculated to protect life and bring criminals to justice. Her Majesty laments that in consequence of the failure of the potato crop there will be a deficiency of food in Ireland ; says that she has adopted all possible precautions, and relies on the co-operation of Parliament in devising other requisite means, and has great satisfaction in assenting to measures for the repeal of prohibitory and the relaxation of protective duties. In the language prepared for the Queen's utterance the settled vindictiveness of Tory government in Ireland casually betrays itself. The protection of life, it is assumed, can only be effected by the punishment of criminals. No prospect is held out, no inference is allowed to be drawn, or hope indulged in, that measures of mercy or justice will prevent the commission of crime. This kind of language is so familiar that any reasoning on it may seem forced and hypercritical. It is familiar to us, no doubt, and so is the condition which it describes ; but what is not familiar to us is that this condition is an essentially tyrannical mode of governing. The people saw famine impending ; they saw their crops carried out of the country and no steps taken to replace them. Agrarian outrages increased, and punishment, not prevention, was the Government proposal. In his speech on the Address, Peel says that the failure of the potato crop had forced an immediate decision on the laws governing the importation of grain. On the 27th he brought forward his scheme of commercial and financial policy. The duties on raw materials had been abandoned, and he called on the manufacturers to relinquish the protection now given to their fabrics. Indian corn and all articles of agricultural produce constituting food, distinct from corn, he proposed to introduce duty free. The duty on corn he would immediately reduce, and after three years abolish. The burdens on land he would alleviate by compelling parishes to unite into districts for the repair of roads, and an alteration in the law of settlement, by which a labouring man who had lived for five years in a manufacturing town could not be removed. Ireland, he said, would suffer most from the withdrawal of protection, and he proposed that the police, which was paid partly by the land and partly by the Treasury, should be paid only by the Treasury, and the control of it vested in the Executive Government. Such had been the recommendation of Lord Devon's commission. Speaking afterwards, on a proposed amendment, Peel reminded the House that before coming to

a decision the state of Ireland should be made known. He then read a number of letters giving an appalling description of distress in that country. He reminded the House that in November he had vainly advised the suspension of the existing duties on corn by an Order in Council. Lord George Bentinck repeatedly declared that the cry of famine in Ireland was a mere pretence for a party purpose. On the 8th of May several members insisted that the distress in Ireland had been extremely exaggerated, and that the fear of famine was at an end. Proofs were brought in reply that the distress, so far from being on the decline, had not yet reached its height. The third reading was carried on May 16th by 327 to 229. In the Lords, Stanley said that the ground assigned for the measure was the famine in Ireland; there was local scarcity in Ireland, but the famine was a vision—a baseless vision. Lord Brougham held the same view. On the 26th of June the bill was read a third time.

The Irish famine was the pretext and excuse for repealing the corn laws. That repeal did not and could not in the slightest degree alleviate the famine in Ireland. Some compensations were contrived for the landlord interest to reconcile it to the new measure: the form which the Irish compensation took was to transfer the sole management and control of the police force to the Executive, thus rendering it a more efficient weapon for working out the landlords' will on the people.

The readers of this history might form an opinion that the writer was borne away by some uncontrollable prejudice against landlordism and religion and law. All his prepossessions are in favour of landlordism; all his hopes rest on the truth of Christianity; law he desires to reverence as the audible voice of God on earth. Irish landlordism, Irish religion, Irish law, are not for a single moment to be treated as instances of these institutions in the natural order. Irish landlordism is robbery by force, confirmed through confiscation by fraud of lawyer and legislator, maintained in its essential, original, and unaltered characters of force and fraud by the policeman's rifle. Irish religion is an absolute denial of Christ and His teaching. Irish law is codified injustice, the sudden passion, the angry flash of the instant, poured like molten lead into the mould of legislation, to be discharged as a deadly missile against the peasant who dares to think that God meant him to possess a home. This is what English government of Ireland has engendered and cherished. It is because hallowed things have been made unholy, divine things made devilish—because angelic powers have been cast out and become fallen spirits, turning Ireland into a hell that threatens to scale the battlements of English freedom—it is in the name and for the sake of landlordism and religion and law that these things as they are in Ireland are put down without exaggeration or mitigation.

SECTION V.

Peel had adopted the current views about protection in his early years without having reflected on them.¹ When circumstances compelled him to consider the subject, he changed his opinions. In 1845 he had

¹ "Memoirs of Sir Robert Peel," part iii., p. 98.

made up his mind to repeal the corn laws, and was anxiously watching for some occasion that would justify his conversion to free trade. The Irish famine exactly suited his purpose. On its first appearance he determined to make it answer his ends, and in order to do this he set his face against any other remedy than the free importation of grain. He must have known that the importation of grain was not what Ireland wanted, but the prohibition of the exportation of grain. But this latter, which was Ireland's only possible safety, was not free trade; and it was not Ireland's safety, but the carrying of free trade, that he had at heart. If Irish necessities were met in a rational and effective way, it would be an argument against the repeal of the corn laws; therefore Peel could not see the rational or effective way save as an obstacle. He thought he was acting honestly and logically, when he was only playing with the Union, making it cover starving Ireland and agitating Lancashire, by such rapid movements of thought that either interest might stand for the other. On the 13th of October, writing to Sir James Graham, he says: "I foresee the necessity that may be imposed upon us at an early period of considering whether there is not that well-grounded apprehension of actual scarcity that justifies and compels the adoption of every means of relief which the exercise of the prerogative or legislation might afford. I have no confidence in such remedies as the prohibition of exports or the stoppage of distilleries. The removal of impediments to import is the only effectual remedy."¹ On October 26th Sir James writes to Peel: "The Lord-Lieutenant begins to press for instructions with respect to prohibiting, by proclamation, the export of potatoes and distillation from potatoes."² To this Peel replied: "Lord Heytesbury, from his occasional remarks on proclamations, seems to labour under an impression that there is a constitutional right to issue them. Now, there is absolutely none. There is no more abstract right to prohibit the export of a potato than to command any other violation of law." Yet in his letter to Sir J. Graham of the 13th he had foreseen the inevitable exercise of the prerogative. He goes on to say: "I have a strong impression that we shall do more harm than good by controlling the free action of the people in respect to the legal export of these commodities, or the legal use of them." The word "legal" must have been suggested to qualify, logically, the marvellous unreality of the expression "free action of the people" in reference to the exportation of Irish produce. On the 24th Lord Heytesbury writes: "There is a great cry for the prohibition of exportation, particularly of oats."³ And again on the 27th: "Should I be authorised in issuing a proclamation prohibiting distillation from grain? This is demanded on all sides."⁴ Peel does not give his replies to those letters. In his cabinet memorandum of November 1st he calculates that "there will be no hope of contributions from England for the mitigation of this calamity. Monster meetings, the ungrateful return for past kindness, the subscriptions in Ireland to repeal rent, and O'Connell tributes, will have disinclined the charitable here to make any great exertion for Irish relief."⁵ If England contributed largely, there would be no need of an extraordinary Government step that must entail repeal of the corn laws;

¹ "Memoirs of Sir Robert Peel," p. 113. ² *Ibid.*, p. 180. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 138. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

so Peel libels England, assigning to the nation what he conceived to be the feeling of a faction. In the same memorandum, in order to press his case and show its urgency, he says: "Countries from which, under ordinary circumstances, we might draw supplies, are prohibiting export. I heard to-day that at Mayence, and in the countries bordering on the Rhine, the export of potatoes down the Rhine is prohibited."¹ He quoted the instinctive gesture of self-protection which other countries were making, and for permission to make which Ireland was beseeching, only as an argument that ordinary sources of supply were cut off, and that an Order in Council, necessarily to be followed by repeal, was inevitable. In the same pursuit of arguments, he says: "The Irish population of Manchester and Liverpool are, I presume, supported in great measure on potatoes."² Sir Robert Peel actually believed, or allowed himself to imagine, that the Irish people, of their own free will and choice, reduced themselves to an inferior article of diet in order to be able to pay more rent, and that they would continue to do so when they had escaped from landlordism. He might as rationally have said of Irishmen residing in France or Italy during the penal laws, that he presumed they did not send their children to school, or attend public worship, or acquire property. He might as well have said of negro slaves escaped to England, that he presumed they wore their chains.

When Peel failed on the 6th of November to persuade his colleagues to issue an Order in Council remitting the duty on grain, with the express view of its leading to a modification of the corn laws, he resolved, acting in concert with Sir James Graham and Mr. Goulburn, to take the unusual step of authorising a very large purchase of Indian corn in the United States on account of the Government.³ "I should greatly have preferred," he says, "the introduction of this additional supply of food through the ordinary medium of private adventure, stimulated, as it would have been, by the suspension of the import duty. I considered it, however, of so much importance to provide, *by any means*, for an increased supply of food, and to habituate the Irish people to the consumption of a novel species of food as a substitute for their ordinary subsistence, that I did not hesitate to unite with those of my colleagues whom I have above named in secretly giving a very large order for the purchase of Indian corn and meal in the markets of the United States. The whole transaction was conducted with great judgment and discretion by the house of Baring, acting on behalf of the Treasury, that department undertaking the whole pecuniary responsibility."⁴ Peel had satisfied himself that the reality of the Irish famine would justify this step, and by taking it he furnished himself with what he concluded to be an unanswerable argument for his projected free-trade legislation. It practically put him in the same position as if the Order in Council had been issued, and enabled him to say in the Queen's Speech that all possible precautions had been taken. But, as a matter of fact, the necessity for an artificial importation of Indian meal into Ireland had no connection with the want of free trade in corn in England. Ireland was a corn-exporting country—England was a corn-importing country. The

¹ "Memoirs of Sir R. Peel," p. 145.

² *Ibid.*, p. 146.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁴ *Ibid.*, part iii., p. 178.

Ibid., pp. 191, 202.

self-imposed obligation which Ministers felt to maintain the unnatural condition of things that misgovernment had produced in Ireland was metamorphosed in State papers into Irish need. Ireland was in no need. It was not the corn laws that had broken down in Ireland, but the system of land tenure. It was to maintain this system under its failure that Peel purchased the Indian corn in America. The remedy for Ireland was the prohibition of exportation, which would have fed the people, and brought the relation of landlord and tenant to a healthy and natural state. Peel and his colleagues had the consciousness, though he persisted in arguing against it, that the relaxation of corn duties could not affect Irish distress. The corn laws were repealed in favour of the manufacturing interest in England. There was no manufacturing interest in Ireland. The class in Ireland corresponding to English operatives were the tillers of the soil, and they could be benefited only by a repeal of the land laws. Peel saw all the nations either prohibiting exportation or else attempting to prevent it by popular risings,¹ and because this remedy, for political reasons, could not be applied in Ireland, he set aside the ordinary law of political economy by an arbitrary act, and made it the ground of repealing the corn laws. Had he avowed that Irish land tenure indirectly caused and immediately inflicted the famine, it would have left him without his main argument. On the 2nd of July the Anti-Corn Law League was dissolved. The English press commented on this proceeding, in contrast with O'Connell's having continued his machinery of agitation after emancipation was gained in 1829. It is well known that Cobden always regretted not having turned the league into an anti-land law association.

SECTION VI.

A Coercion Bill was introduced in the House of Lords. Lord St. Germain moved the second reading on the 24th of February. Lord Grey moved that one year's imprisonment should be substituted for fifteen years' transportation for being found out of doors between sunset and sunrise. His amendment was rejected by a majority of 38 to 7. The bill passed without opposition. On March 30th, Sir J. Graham moved that it be read a first time in the House of Commons. He said that in thirty-two counties life and property were as safe as in England, and in eighteen of these crime was diminishing. It was the condition of five counties—Tipperary, Clare, Roscommon, Limerick, and Leitrim—that necessitated the present measure. O'Connell called on the Government to look into the real condition of the people of Ireland, and to pass the only coercion act that was required—an act to coerce the landlord who would not do his duty, and to rescue the people from their present condition. Of course the Government wished to see Ireland prospering, and they had given a strong proof of their desire. They had the power in their hands, and if they would take a manly tone and adopt a temperate and dignified estimate of human nature with respect to Ireland, they might stand over her and wave the wand that would turn her misery and poverty to prosperity and happiness. He traced the outrages whose existence formed

¹ "Memoirs of Sir R. Peel," p. 188.

the pretext for the present coercive measures to the nature of land tenure and the anomalous relations between landlord and tenant. He referred to the acts passed since the Union to show the many unjust advantages conferred on the landlord, and the consequent helplessness of the tenant. Such advantages had proved fertile sources of murder, especially that which related to the power to distrain upon growing crops. "There was in Ireland what was called a 'starving season' for about six weeks before the new harvest, and, if the growing crops were distrained, the labourers were deprived of their means of subsistence. They were prevented from digging; if their wives or children came out in the evening to take a few potatoes, they were consigned to a gaol, and the husbands were driven to madness; and could it be a matter of surprise that this state of things was a fruitful source of crime?—of crime which did not exist before the Union, but which was directly traceable to the legislation of the House?" Coercion bills had already failed *seventeen times*. The true remedies were measures for the adjustment of the tenure of land, and for securing to tenants a fair compensation for improvements, a modification of the Ejectment Bill, to check the wholesale clearance system, a modification of the grand jury law, adequate corporate reforms, and a better distribution of Church temporalities. Lord Morpeth said "that though he was going to give a vote not in conformity with the majority of the representatives of Ireland, he was ready to allow that the people of that country, in honesty of dealing between man and man, and in patience under want and privation, were superior to any other people in the world. He was also ready to allow that it might be easy to pick out crime more enormous in England than any committed in Ireland; but it was not the enormity, but the system of Irish crime, which called at present for some intervention on the part of the Legislature." On the 8th of June the second reading was moved. Sir W. Somerville said that "at present the bulk of the population of Ireland believed themselves to be out of the pale of the law; and was it surprising, then, that they should frame a code of laws of their own? The same thing had been done nearer home. For example, in Scotland crime had been committed, sanctioned, and winked at by the great body of the people, when they thought that the laws were against them and that individuals were employed to introduce a system which was obnoxious to the population of that country. Witness, for instance, the murder of Archbishop Sharpe, when the crowd allowed the assassin to recede without a single arm being raised to arrest his progress." Mr. Poulett Scrope insisted that the outrages were not the disease; they were the symptoms only. "What, then, is the disease, and what its causes? The disease that affects the Irish peasantry, and causes them to commit or to sanction those shocking outrages which swell your constabulary reports—that disease which you say affects the whole body politic, and disorganises society—is a deadly struggle among the people for life and the means of living—a frightful competition for the necessaries of life, for the means of existence. . . . Your object, you say, is to protect life. But, remember, life is destroyed in Ireland in other ways than by the bullet of the assassin. When a landlord clears his estate, by driving from their homes hundreds of poor tenants

who have no other possible resource of refuge, does he not as effectually destroy their lives as if he shot them at once? It would be mercy to do so in comparison. Do you deny that the lives of the peasantry are unprotected by law—that they are obliged to protect themselves by these criminal outrages? I ask you if, since these very discussions began, we have not had proofs, multiplied proofs, of the mode in which the landlords of Ireland are decimating the people of Ireland? . . . Is not an ejection tantamount to a sentence of death on a small farmer; . . . and can you wonder at his retaliating on him whom he feels to be his oppressor? or can you wonder that the thousands who know themselves to be exposed to this fate every day combine to save themselves from it by a system of intimidation and outrage? I do not blame the landlords; I blame the law which gives them the power of life and death over the peasantry of Ireland.” Mr. Seymour, arguing for the bill, put the preceding statements in another form. “He admitted that most atrocious crimes were committed in England; but then hon. members ought to remember that most of the murders in England were committed in secret; those committed in Ireland were perpetrated in the open day. This last showed that there was no analogy between crime in England and in Ireland.” Lord John Russell said that possession of land made the difference between existing and starving among the peasantry, and that ejections were the cause of crime in Ireland. Those are only a very few of the explanations given of Irish crimes and of their appropriate remedy. Sir R. Peel had only one reply. He referred to Mr. Scrope’s speech: “The hon. gentleman says there is no chance of obtaining tranquillity in Ireland until you have a law giving the Irish peasantry a right to live upon the land. Now, I differ from the hon. gentleman. I think it would be an unwise provision to introduce such a bill. In my opinion it would but lead to confiscation of property, and would not afford any effectual remedy for destitution.” And then he proceeded to insist that if crime was allowed to become triumphant, they should be neglecting their immediate duty to those in danger. If the landlord’s right was transcendent and inviolable, however he abused it, and whatever the consequences of his abuse, and any modification of it by law was confiscation, of course there was no preventive for agrarian crime. The battle must go on, Government must claim absolute power, and, admitting no popular grievance, exercise only the attributes of vengeance. But this is the exact opposite of constitutional government. Instead of government, there arises a conflict of increasing obstinacies and growing passions between rulers and ruled, in which all regard for legality vanishes, and each watches its opportunity to strike a final blow. Mr. Sheil showed how Ministers had been the first in the strife of lawlessness in their management of the State trials. “How was it possible, when justice had committed suicide, when authority had perpetrated a felony upon itself, when those who were entrusted with the enforcement of the law had brought it into scorn—how, I say, was it possible, when these events affected all other classes, that their influences should not reach to the lowest class of the community; that when the moral atmosphere was thus charged with contagion, the poor peasant should remain un-

affected, and that in the midst of the general turbulence into which the country was cast by the Government, they who have the greatest grievances to complain of—they who groan beneath the wrongs which, we are told by the highest of all authorities, make wise men mad, should not break out into those excesses for which an incarceration for keeping out of their homes after sunset is prescribed, with all the pertinacity of baffled empiricism, as a sovereign and unfailing cure? I have shown you that your Government (if government it can indeed be called) has produced disorder. I will show you that a Government constructed on different principles has been fertile of peace. Compare the results of your government in Ireland with those of Lord Normanby's administration." He then quoted from an address presented to Lord Normanby from the town of Mallow: "We stand before you," the addressers said, "in number amounting to above one hundred thousand—the greater part of us own ourselves to have belonged to that party who advocate the repeal of the Union. We thought the only remedy for Irish evils was a recurrence to a domestic legislature, but the experience we have had of your excellency's wise, just, and paternal government has taught us otherwise, and we tender to your excellency our solemn abjuration of the question of the repeal of the legislative Union, and of any other question calculated to produce an alienation of feeling between the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland." "The Secretary at War," Mr. Sheil continued, "in the course of his speech employed the words 'dismemberment of the empire.' Our hon. friend the member for Kilkenny took fire at the phrase. He has no more notion of dismembering the empire than you have. The Secretary at War explained, and stated that he did not mean to insinuate that the advocates of repeal intended to assert the dismemberment of the empire, but that he conceived that the separation of the two countries would be the result. If this be your opinion—if you think that the repeal of the Union would break the empire into fragments—that both countries would be engulfed in a common ruin, surely it behoves you to avoid with the most solicitous care everything that can afford a justification to those who have devoted all their energies to the achievement of that measure." . . . In 1819 Lancashire, and in 1830 Kent, were in a condition far more formidable than Tipperary, and no coercion bill was proposed. . . . "How does it come to pass that you are reckless of our rights, though secured by that which should be accounted an inviolable compact, and that you deal with us in a different fashion from that which you adopt with men of your own race? Are we less entitled to the privileges of Englishmen? I fear that the spirit of eminence and masterdom is so fixedly settled in you, that you can never bring yourselves to regard us as your equals: you maintain a kind of English rule upon the statute-book, and cannot acquire a desuetude of domination. And yet you ought to do so—you ought most assuredly to get rid of those addictions to despotism, for you may rest assured that we have divested ourselves of all habitudes of subserviency."¹ On June 25th the House divided, and there were for the second reading 219, against it 292. Two hours before the division it was known that the Lords had passed the bill for the repeal of the corn laws. On the 29th Peel resigned, and Lord John Russell became Premier.

¹ Hansard.

SECTION VII.

The Ministry entered on office with warm declarations of their intention to do justice to all classes of Irishmen. The rights of Irish Roman Catholics were recognised by the promotion of three of their body to places in the Government. Sheil was appointed Master of the Mint; Mr. T. Wyse was made one of the Secretaries of the Board of Control; Mr. Remington was sent to Ireland as Under Secretary; the Earl of Bessborough took the post of Viceroy, and Mr. Labouchere that of Chief Secretary. The *Times* began to belaud O'Connell, and advised the Government to gain his aid. "A Government," it said, "which should employ itself in improving the material and social condition of the Irish people would awaken sentiments of gratitude, affection, and joy, such as no people had hitherto shown to their rulers. But a Government beginning to act thus would need an interpreter between itself and the people. Such an interpreter would O'Connell be if he would consent to prefer the prosperity and happiness of his country to hopeless struggle for an ideal advantage." At the first meeting of the Repeal Association, after the Whigs took office, O'Connell declared his readiness to support them if they granted certain concessions, which he specified. If he had the people in their strength and their union at his back, he could almost have made his own terms. A nation of strong men with one voice asking for legislative redress has a significance behind what it says, and even what it intends to say. Those to whom the appeal is made can understand it. It was on this line that O'Connell had conducted his struggle. Lord Miltown now addressed a public letter to him, suggesting the postponement of the repeal agitation for a session, in order to give time for the promotion of an *Irish party*, to assist or urge the Ministry in procuring justice for Ireland. He declined. To the Irish, repeal was the measure of their wants—to the Ministry, of their concessions. But O'Connell was no longer backed by a nation; the famine was in the land, and his party was divided.

From September, 1845, when the symptoms first appeared, to the end of the year, five hundred and fifteen registered deaths from starvation occurred. The unregistered, and the deaths from fever produced by famine, are unknown. In the same period, three millions two hundred and fifty thousand quarters of wheat, besides cattle without number, had been shipped for England. The London newspapers, in an undertone of awe, as if they were speaking of an earthquake or a deluge, circulated the calculation that before the next harvest the population of Ireland would be lessened by two millions. Much about the same time a curious fancy, emanating from the press, occupied some of the idle time of even business men. It was said that if a small silver coin was suspended from a string, held by finger and thumb, within a wineglass, the coin would spontaneously begin to oscillate, strike the right hour of the day against the sides of the glass, and then gradually cease to move. Numbers of persons tried the experiment, and found it to succeed. They knew the hour, and an unconscious impulse did the rest. The landlord interest of England and Ireland held the population of Ireland,

with its alleged surplus, absolutely dependent on it, with a pre-conceived calculation of what the famine would accomplish.

The Commissariat Relief Department was organised at the close of 1845 for the distribution of the Indian corn imported by Sir Robert Peel. The object was to aid the regular corn and meal trade, and no supplies were to be sold from the Government stores till it appeared that no other means of obtaining food existed. In January, 1846, a vote of £50,000, to be placed at the disposal of the Treasury, for draining bogs and other public works, on condition that a like sum was raised by private subscription, was agreed to. In February a grant of £50,000, to be spread over five years at £10,000 a year, was voted to extend fisheries, a fourth of the sum expended to be locally raised. On this the *Times* remarked: "The bill introduced on Monday night is a forcible commentary on the condition of Ireland and the conduct of her political quacks. . . . The Celt now comes to the Saxon to beg of him a large dole of charity, to haggle on the terms of the gift, and to demand its enlargement. . . . Ireland presents the phenomenon of a country whose inhabitants, usually subsisting on the very commonest food, are now stinted in that. . . . They have but one kind of food, the very lowest. That failing, there is nothing between the people and starvation but weeds and thistles. And this happens in a country where grain of a superior quality grows in abundance—a country which stocks the markets of England with oats and wheat, even at a time when its own people are famishing on scant potatoes—a country which sells us corn of every kind at a low price, whilst we are contributing money to relieve it from the horrors of death and pestilence. This is a phenomenon such as no other country in the world exhibits. . . . This is the natural law of their social existence. Nor is it easy to see how legislative interference could change its peculiar phase, except in the manner now indicated by Government. It seems the natural state of things that a poor country should apply in time of severe distress to a rich neighbour." "Was there ever heard of such a thing," Lord Cloncurry wrote soon after, "as the almost yearly famine of this country, abounding in all the necessities of life, and endeavouring to beg or borrow some of its own money to escape starvation!" The grant over which the *Times* blew so loud a trumpet blast was never used. It lay uncalled for in the Treasury. Drainage and general improvement of land of the kind proposed, the landlords thought within themselves, would interfere with the rights of property. Several other measures were taken by the Government to afford employment for the people. Acts were passed empowering grand juries to appoint extraordinary presentment sessions for county works, consolidating the powers of the Commissioners of Public Works, and facilitating the employment of the labouring poor for a limited time in the distressed districts. There was great delay in carrying out those acts. The whole machinery of boards, commissions, and inquiries had to be prepared, and loss of time was loss of life.

The blight continued its mysterious course. The quantity of land under potatoes in 1846 was a million and a half acres, valued at twenty million pounds. Towards the end of June the plant began to decay,

and by the middle of August there was not a sound potato left. Science was baffled. The appearance of the plant defeated every attempt even to guess at where the disease commenced. Sound stalks had roots completely rotten. Blighted stalks had roots that for a time remained comparatively sound. White and fetid mists, supposed to be laden with disease, according to some observers, descended on the doomed districts. White mists, according to others, arose from the smitten fields. The only fact that was plain was that between three and four millions of people were wholly deprived of the food on which they habitually lived.

On the 15th of August the Government works of relief ceased. On the 17th Lord John Russell intimated that the previous mode of meeting the distress, however good and praiseworthy, disturbed trade; and announced the intention of the Government to bring in a bill empowering the Viceroy to summon baronial and county sessions to provide works for the people. This bill became law, and was known as the Labour-rate Act. No person was to be employed on the relief works who could obtain employment otherwise, and the wages given must be twopence a day less than the average rate of wages in the district. The payment was to be not by the day, but in proportion to the work done. The meal at the Government depôts was to be sold at such prices as allowed private traders selling at the same price a reasonable profit. All the work under the Labour-rate Act must be unproductive. Not a rood of ground could be reclaimed or improved. All these precautions were intended for the enforcement of a principle, not for the preservation of lives. They confounded the welfare of a community through consistent government, with the immediate safety of individuals through measures suited to an emergency. Awed by the assumed irreversibility of natural law, and disdaining miracles as a superstition, men reduce mercy to the level of a miracle, and uphold the unchanging law of political economy. In all matters they hold that man is made for law, not law for man. The simple facts before Government were that the food on which over three millions of the people of Ireland were made dependent by England's protection of Irish landlordism, had failed, and that there was other produce in the country that could supply the deficiency of potatoes fourfold, but that this produce had been diverted by English law to the markets of England, in order to pay rent, that was also spent in England. It was not the law of political economy, but English law, that caused this unnatural condition. Now that the system toppled like a falling tower, and threatened wholesale ruin, it was English law, and not the law of political economy, that could arrest and undo its own work. But English law persisted in maintaining its own work, and appealed to the laws of political economy for its support. It was as if a man should transport another man's property to his own ground, and then plead that the law of attraction held it there. This failure of the potato in Ireland had not been through lack of industry, but by some defect of the soil or climate, for which rent was paid. If the land is unable to yield the crop it was engaged to yield, no rent could be honestly demanded. The adequacy of the matter concerned is a primary condition in every contract. It was consistently suggested to offer the diseased potatoes as rent, or if this

view was not taken, and the life of the people was held to be a primary consideration, the surviving produce of the land should have been retained in the country, and supplied to the people on equitable terms. Peel had not contemplated this, for it would foil his purpose; but he purchased foreign grain. Even this was disowned by Lord John Russell. The term law has embarrassed and misled minds of a pedantic turn. If a man masters the principle or spirit of a law, its letter is only a symbol to him of its principle. If he has not mastered the spirit, the letter only perplexes and misplaces his natural reason or conscience. Peel had reached some of the principles of political economy; Lord John Russell never got beyond the letter, and the letter killed. Vapours arise from the ocean, circulate through the atmosphere, settle on mountains, and feed springs, which supply nations with fresh water. But if a crew, perishing from thirst, could catch the vapours as they arose, and turn them to the immediate supply of their necessities, Lord John Russell might call it an interference with the law of nature. So he acted at least with reference to the Irish famine. The country teemed with corn, but he decided that the law of trade, really an eddy caused by English obstruction, required that this corn should go abroad and enter into the general commerce—although he might have known that in no form whatever was it possible for it to return to Ireland, any more than the mountain stream would ever reach a perishing crew in mid-ocean. In 1848, not less than three hundred thousand persons died of hunger or typhus fever, and one million eight hundred and twenty-six thousand one hundred and thirty-two quarters of wheat and barley were exported.

Free trade is assumed to mean the easy interchange of commodities between the products of different countries and climates. It is in reality used for the advantage of persons who make money as agents of the interchange. The regulation allowing private dealers to sell at a reasonable profit could only act in keeping up the prices charged at Government stores; it could not avail in keeping down the prices of the general market. Corn speculators purchased cargoes at a high rate to maintain high prices. Indian corn, which had been bought for £9 a ton, was sold in Cork for £17, at Limerick for £19. These were famine prices. Fortunes of £40,000 to £80,000 were made by corn dealers. The rule by which labourers were paid according to the work done was an engine of torture and death. The weakest and most hunger-stricken would earn least. They often could reach only three or four pence a day, and they frequently had to travel from four to eight miles to their labour, and as far to purchase meal. They died at their work, they died on the roadside. Every clause of the Labour-rate Act seemed to aim at leaving things as they had been when the famine should have passed away. Wages were always far too low in proportion to the price of food, and it was now specially contemplated that they were to continue so. If there was a desire that the people should have a better food than potatoes, and not be liable to future famine, the obvious course would be to look on the failure as final and make other provision for future years. Instead of this, men were employed in making roads that led nowhere, in cutting down hills, making pits, and filling them again.

SECTION VIII.

Protests and remonstrances poured in on the Ministry from every side. On January the 14th, 1847, a conference of landed proprietors took place in Dublin, and recommended the formation of an Irish party to save the kingdom. Parliament was opened on the 19th. Lord John Russell proposed and carried two bills: one, an extension of the poor law, enacted that the guardians of the poor should give relief, either in or out of the workhouse, to the aged and infirm, and to all who were permanently disabled; the other provided for the formation of relief committees in certain districts, which should receive subscriptions and Government donations, levy rates, and out of the sum thus raised purchase food, establish soup kitchens, and deliver rations gratuitously to those who could not pay, or at a small charge to such as could afford it. Thus the Ministry acknowledged themselves to have been totally wrong in their previous measures. When the Government works ceased on the 15th of August, 1846, ninety-seven thousand persons were thrown out of employment until the new method was in readiness. In May, 1847, the number on the works was seven hundred and thirty-four thousand. In May they were all discharged, but the soup kitchens were not ready. When those bills were before the House of Lords, Lord Stanley was strongly of opinion that boards of guardians should not have power to give relief to any person in occupation or possession of land. All applicants for relief should have the option of receiving it only on condition of surrendering the land they occupied. When the House of Commons was in committee on the Poor Relief Bill, Mr. Gregory proposed that if any occupier of land, rated at less than £5 a year, was willing to give up his land and emigrate, with all dependent on him, favourable terms should be afforded to enable him to do so. Government accepted this amendment. Mr. Gregory then proposed another clause, enacting that no person in occupation of land of greater extent than a quarter of a statute acre should be deemed a destitute person under the provisions of the act, or should be entitled to relief until he had, absolutely and *bona fide*, parted with all right and title to such land. On this clause a division was made: there were for it, 117; against it, 7. The obvious and unconcealed intention of these provisions was to assist landlords in clearing their estates of tenants, and compelling them to emigrate or starve. This course may have been expedient or not at the time, but no one thought of restricting landlords in their power of promoting an increase of population for their own convenience, and then destroying it for their own convenience as often as they pleased. In the sight of men and of history this power was asked for. In the sight of men and history it was given. Before the face of silently-recording Heaven it was duly exercised. Thousands of cabins were torn down, often without any legal right, and the inmates driven into the ditches, from which those who did not die were carried in cartloads to the workhouse. Men of gaunt frames were borne along, with naked legs and arms hanging outside the cart. Peasant farmers, thorough gentlemen in manly sensibility, could be seen from time to time in the landlord's kitchen, with the terrible famine glare

in the eye, telling of the agony which pride was struggling to conceal. The work of demolition went on. Some of the unroofed houses remained for a long time with an article of household use, such as a broom, standing in the accustomed corner, showing the suddenness of the removal. Diseases swarmed like ravens round a dying beast. The workhouses, hospitals, and gaols—for gaols became houses of refuge—overflowed like effervescing vessels. Irish funerals had been one of the most touching scenes in rural life, as they filed along the hill sides, emitting at intervals musical wails, to be wafted by the winds. They changed in character, and became rapid and silent. Fear for the living overcame sorrow for the dead. Then they ceased altogether. Three or four gaunt men staggered under a coffin from their home into the nearest village on the way to the churchyard, laid it down there, and went away without a word. A few men of the village carried it a stage further, and a fresh relay at last bore it to its final resting-place. This daily became a more frequent occurrence. Then burials without coffins became the rule. Then the dead were buried where they fell. Then whole families died in their cabins, and lay there. In some places packs of hounds, which their owners could not feed and would not destroy, wandered about like wolves. For awhile the people were in a stupor of bewildered surprise. After a time the survivors, startled into a sense of their condition, sprang up with what strength remained to them, and rushed from the island. England offered the nearest asylum. But England was compelled to protect herself from an invasion of disease by quarantine, and by causing the fares on the steamers to be raised. Then like those animals that, led by a strange instinct of migration, pour themselves like rivers into the ocean, and perish there, the desperate crowd flung themselves, as it were, into the Atlantic. In 1847 eighty-nine thousand seven hundred and eighty-three persons embarked for Canada. Six thousand one hundred died on the voyage, four thousand one hundred on their arrival, five thousand two hundred in hospitals, nineteen hundred in towns to which they made their way. A quarter of a million died of fever; twenty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy of starvation. The total value of the agricultural produce of the year was £44,958,120, which would have amply sustained double the whole population of the island. During the continuance of the famine two millions and a half of the people disappeared. A million and a quarter died of starvation and pestilence; the remainder left the country. The work was done, and the *Times* praised God in leaded type. Constitutional England—land of jurists, statesmen, and philosophers—is practically known to Ireland only through the human aberrations of a prime minister; intellectual England—land of poets, scholars, and orators—is known to Ireland mainly through the venal malice of a newspaper.

Many persons in the position of landlords did their duty during the famine, and devoted themselves to the mitigation of the people's sufferings. The clergy of both creeds were true to their calling. But the great absentees, landlords and clergy, passed on the other side. If we desire to think well of our kind, we may find encouragement in the spontaneous and untiring benevolence of multitudes of English men and women, who strove to aid the perishing Irish as if they were striving for members of

their own families. But the deeds of private persons or groups of persons are not our subject. History is not biography, except so far as individuals represent the community in its political aspect. We must not lose our way in details, nor our lesson in emotion of anger or gratitude, nor sit at the spectacle of a nation's anguish without profit. Our subject is a question between class and class, between nation and nation. When we wish to fire the blood, or touch the spring of passion, we take simple instances of cruelty, or courage, or wrong, or endurance. When we want political knowledge, we must view the conduct of ranks or classes of men. Landlordism, as such, during the famine had only one characteristic wish, and that was to get rid of the people. Never did a power-endowed and privileged class so indisputably prove their unworthiness of unrestricted possession. The only excuse that can be made for them, and it is an excuse, is that they had not been taught to identify pressure with protection, and to measure enjoyment of privilege by performance of duty, but held their position solely by the support of a foreign authority. England had the greatest opportunity ever given to a nation of demonstrating that one country can rule another in equity. History can show no such failure as hers. One other record remains: "No such amount of suffering and misery has been chronicled in Irish history since the days of Edward Bruce, and yet, through all, the forbearance of the Irish peasantry, and the calm submission with which they bore the deadliest ills that could fall on man, can scarcely be paralleled in the annals of any people."¹

Census Report for the year 1851.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SECESSION.

SECTION I.

ON the 16th of September, just the eve of the famine, Thomas Davis died, after a few days' illness. He was to the Young Ireland party what O'Connell was to the nation. He represented patriotic culture, as O'Connell represented moral force, in politics. He was so high-minded and unselfish that he could have worked his system in subordination to O'Connell, and he was so beloved and respected that his friends would have followed O'Connell under the kindred banner of his intermediary leadership. Now that he was gone, Young Ireland tended to become a group of scattered units, each asserting its separate value. We must allow for vanity in all human affairs, but the first condition of such a struggle as that in which Ireland was engaged was that vanity should not grow into rivalry. The tone of the younger men towards the veteran chief had been for some time, among themselves, one of disrespectful impatience. They sneered at his religion, they smiled at his arts of rule, they were angry at his jealous tenure of sole power. When a man has accomplished a great work, he may lay it down, and hide himself in unambitious retirement. He must not practise this self-abnegation while the work is unfinished. Whether he labours in solitude or at the head of an army of men, he must rely on self as much as he desires success. It is he that is to do it: it is he only who is to do it. He may be weak and incompetent, and then his vanity may be hurtful. But if he be strong, and wins success, his vanity is proved to be not vanity, but the instinctive self-assertion and self-protection of a cause. There are those who in sheer unthinking vigour enter on a scene of strife and conquer, and are proud or vain of their achievement. Their pride is the dust of their triumphal car. There are others who yearn to do the achievement for the sake of the dust. It would be very untrue to apply this description literally to the Young Ireland party, for no description applies literally, and they were as a body aiming with pure intentions at one end; but it is undeniable that they suffered the means sometimes to obscure the end, and the means were more or less themselves. They acknowledged O'Connell's supremacy; they knew that the people trusted him, and could not be severed from him; and they desired to have the management of this sovereign power. They would follow O'Connell, but it was on condition that he armed himself with weapons of their devising, and went in a direction of their choosing. They were like men who come in at the eleventh hour of some long enterprise that has been tasking the patience and sapping the energies of those engaged in it for weary years, and say, Now let us cease talking, and do something. The captains who have played great parts in human affairs are not to be viewed by us like those who live with us in our day, and pass away and

are no more. They represent principles, mark stages, signalise methods. We do not go back to them to scrutinise their foibles, or to find by close inspection the qualities in which they stood on a level with the crowd. They become abstractions in the vistas of time, and stand alone, towering in the distance, memorials and monuments of the tides of human history. Not much more than a generation has passed since O'Connell's death, but that period has been marked by so many vicissitudes, crossed by so many broken lights, shadowed by so many storms, that we gaze as if through the lapse of centuries on a colossal figure alone in the desert, with his face still towards us, watching over the fortunes of his country.

SECTION II.

The mere mention of some of the principal differences of opinion and policy between O'Connell and the men who competed with him for the allegiance of Ireland will best explain the divisions that arose in the Repeal Association. The histories of the period, which would be valuable only as they revealed and illustrated the grounds of dissension, are written for the most part unintentionally to conceal them. O'Connell invented the mode of popular agitation that has since been used with such signal success in England and Ireland. He was conscientiously opposed to all attempts to win freedom by insurrectionary movements. He always condemned the rebellion of 1798. He knew that mere masses of peasants cannot stand in warfare before regular troops. But he thought, and was right in thinking, that multitudes brought together, time after time, outnumbering any armies that could be led into the field, are a demonstration to the formal rulers of a nation of a popular will and purpose and resolve that should be more influential than any purpose for which an army is ever assembled. A meeting of citizens deliberating and deciding has more weight than regiments of soldiers to a reasoning mind. They who rule nations cannot but be impressed by the uttered will of nations. Could the Clontarf meeting have been held without collision; could that great array of peaceful citizens have stood and expressed their human and national wants by their presence; and could the troops of cavalry, infantry, and artillery have stood before them, and both retired after their respective demonstrations, who can doubt what the balance of opinion would have been on the beholders? Sir Robert Peel would never have attempted to suppress peaceful exhibitions of national desire unless he knew that they were leaving indelible marks on the conscience of the world. The charge of intimidation that was raised was only the craven cry of mental cowards confuted by the voice of the people. It is true that armed force may be employed to suppress peaceful deliberations; but the attempt had been made, and failed. O'Connell carried his method triumphantly through the opposition of armaments and law courts. He continued to hold his meetings. Ministerial obstinacy was yielding before their repeated shocks, when famine came on the nation and discord on its leaders.

Another cause of dispute was O'Connell's readiness to enter into alliance with the Liberals when they came into power. But this could not have been unexpected or uncalculated, save by men who did not

calculate. Had his cotemporaries reflected on his character as indicated by his life, had they surveyed the history of Europe or the world since he began to mingle in events, they could not have laid their hands on any incident or interest that concerns human freedom or happiness on which his genius did not throw light, to which his zealous advocacy did not lend impetus. This man was not merely an agitator for Irish rights; he was not forcing his country's claims alone through stagnation or resistance; he was swaying the tides and filling the sails of freedom on whatever ocean she had embarked. He was especially concerned in the progress of English reform, and he was almost as popular with the commonalty of England as with the peasants of his own country. Why should he not help to keep a Liberal Government in office, if only for England's sake? If it be said that he should confine his exertions to the good of Ireland, let that be the ground of censure—let him be blamed because his vision took in the unfranchised masses of the sister island; and the reply will be that he never contemplated the separation of the two countries—that the incessant effort of his life was to unite them by mutual obligation and mutual gratitude, by equal laws and equal liberties. A few of his friends or followers obtained posts in or under Government. This was only an instalment of the due distribution of power that must belong to the Union, if there is to be a union. He took no office himself. Like Moses, he showed the promised land, but set no foot on it.

In the spring of 1845 the committee of the association passed a vote that the Parliamentary members of that body should cease their attendance at Parliament. In June, the chairman of the Committee of Selection for Railways issued a circular requiring attendance at the selection of committees. Messrs. John O'Connell and Smith O'Brien wrote in reply, refusing to attend. In April, 1846, O'Connell and his son were in London, and acted on committees. When O'Brien arrived, he resolved to stand by himself and oppose the authority of the House. Several members, including O'Connell, begged of him to yield. He refused, and was imprisoned. O'Connell called on him while in prison, and he refused to see him. He expected that all Ireland would rise in his support, and was deeply chagrined at the indifference displayed. The Eighty-two Club—a club established during the Kilmainham imprisonment, and distinguished for its dinner parties and gay uniform—sent a deputation to him with an expression of approval and confidence. O'Connell was fairly entitled to use his own discretion in this matter, and O'Brien's duty was to follow his leader.

These were some of the grounds of variance that arose between O'Connell and the Young Irelanders. He strove to keep them in the ranks he was leading, to use their assistance, and present an unbroken front to the enemy; they refused to follow unless they had the arrangement of the whole campaign. With every wish to judge indulgently, with every allowance for the stimulants of brilliant abilities and expanding views, it is impossible to look at the actual circumstances of that time without seeing that the dissentients, apart from errors of judgment, did not yield sufficiently to the feelings of respect and admiration for O'Connell which they professed. They were jealous of each other, and

they were all jealous of him. They were young men with careers of adventure before them. The repeal struggle was to them an intense enjoyment. It was not work, but pleasure. They rioted in the fields of liberty that O'Connell's exertions had thrown open to them. They shouted with exuberance of spirits, and sang the "Marseillaise" in railway carriages. They indulged to the full in all the gaieties that Dublin life offered. They met at each other's houses weekly, and omitted no portion of the feast that lends exhilaration to the fancy. They sought and enjoyed literary friendships among the bitterest enemies of Ireland and O'Connell; and he, old and solitary, after a life of endless toil, was going into the dark vale, not with armour laid aside and lance in rest, but armed and fighting to the last.

SECTION III.

On the death of Davis, John Mitchel became chief contributor to the *Nation*. Towards the end of 1845, some of the English Tory newspapers recommended the forcible suppression of the repeal movement, and pointed out that in any disturbance that might be caused in Ireland through the coming distress the railways could be used for the conveyance of troops to all parts of Ireland with decisive effect. Mitchel in the next *Nation* described in full detail, and with the enthusiasm of one actually engaged in the work, how easily railways might be made unavailable, or troops in course of conveyance by railways be destroyed. O'Connell remonstrated with Duffy, the editor. The English press interpreted the article as an incitement to the gratuitous destruction of railway property. Notice of a prosecution for seditious libel was served on the editor of the *Nation*, and on the 17th of June the case came on for trial. Duffy was defended by Robert Holmes, who was now past eighty years old.

In 1798 Robert Holmes entered the lawyers' corps of yeomanry, but refused to act against the rebels. This led to his sending a challenge, for which he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He was brother-in-law to Robert Emmet, and was imprisoned on suspicion of being concerned in his insurrection in 1803. He rose to great eminence at the bar, but never would accept offers of advancement, even of a silk gown, made to him by successive governments. O'Connell's repeated condemnation of the rebellion of 1798 made Holmes his enemy, and he was employed in the State Trial of 1844 for the prosecution. The two men may be taken as representatives of the two classes into which the Nationalists were now dividing themselves, and must continue to divide themselves until one or the other gain its object. In this connection Holmes's speech deserves careful perusal. "The jury," he said, "were about to decide whether Mr. Duffy had been guilty of a seditious libel; but there was no fact of which men could form a fair opinion without taking into consideration the circumstances preceding or attending it. One may, for example, deprive another of life; and under certain circumstances this would be murder, under other circumstances it would be manslaughter, but under different circumstances it would be no offence whatever, but what the law calls a justifiable homicide. He

meant to ground his defence in the present case on the fact that Ireland had been all along, and was at that hour, treated as a conquered country: and the people of a country so treated had certain natural rights, which were precisely the rights insisted upon in the prosecuted article. It was charged in the indictment that the writer incited the people to attack the Queen's troops when they were carrying into execution the laws of the Constitution; but not so: the writer argued that if the Queen's troops were employed to oppose the people contrary to law, that resistance would be justifiable, and that the agencies of aggression with which the people were threatened might be employed for their defence. It was undeniably true that if force were used for the purpose of stifling the voice of the people calling constitutionally for any particular measure, resistance under such circumstances would be justifiable. The true criterion of liberty was the right of a people to make laws for their own government; any people subject to laws made for them by another country was not a free people. That Ireland was a subject country, not entitled to make laws for herself, even when she had a separate parliament, but bound to accept such laws as England might think proper to make for her, was the doctrine laid down by so eminent a judge as Lord Mansfield, and stated in specific terms in 'Blackstone.' These jurists taught in effect that Irishmen might be slaughtered as enemies if they did not submit to be governed as slaves. But if force were accepted as a just foundation of government, the sword of Mahomet might as well be accepted as a just foundation of religion.

"In 1719 an act was passed by the English Parliament, not only distinctly declaring their right to legislate for Ireland, but denying the right of the Irish House of Lords to hear appeals from, or exercise any jurisdiction over, courts of justice in their own country. By the energy of Grattan and Flood, and sixty thousand volunteers in arms, this act was repealed, and another was passed in the Imperial Parliament, by which the right of the Irish Parliament to make laws for Ireland and to hear appeals from Irish courts was declared to be 'ascertained and established for ever, and at no time thereafter to be questioned or questionable.' If there was such a thing as faith or honour among nations, the faith and honour of England were pledged that Ireland should ever after be bound only by laws made in her own parliament. Was that faith kept? No; before twenty years the Act of Parliament was annihilated, and the Union passed. It was resisted by all the talent, the public spirit, and the virtue of the land; it was passed by the most unprincipled and barefaced corruption. The private corruption might be fancied, but there was moreover a public bill of sale (4th George III., ch. 24), by which a million and a half sterling were divided to compensate bodies corporate and individuals who ceased to elect members after the Union. The scanty product of his sweating brow was wrung from the peasant's hard hand to grease the itching palm of perfidy. It was now, however, treated as a seditious libel to call on England to redeem her broken faith, and the jury were required to pass a verdict confirmatory of their claims.

"His contention was that Ireland had never, except for a brief interval,

enjoyed the right of making her own laws. Did she at that moment enjoy this right, which constitutes the basis of freedom? The population of Ireland was more than half that of England and Wales, but in the House of Lords the Irish peers were not a ninth part of what England possessed, and in the Commons the proportion was five to one in favour of England. He asserted, as a constitutional lawyer, that the true principle of freedom—which is that a country shall have power to make laws for its own government—was not possessed by Ireland in the nineteenth century. The laws were made by an English majority, to which she could offer no effectual opposition. It was a fallacy and a mockery to speak of Ireland as a free country under such circumstances. The jury must apply this argument to the case before them. The real meaning of the article indicted was that if the sword should be employed to put down public opinion, and the railways used to facilitate the conveyance of troops for that purpose, resistance would be justifiable; and undoubtedly it would. This was the law of nature, and it was the constitution of the realm. Blackstone, who disposed of Irish rights with such admirable coolness, laid down, as among the rights of Englishmen, the right to possess arms to defend their liberties, if they were invaded. It was nearly a century and a half since Molyneux, the friend of Locke, demonstrated that conquest could give England no rightful dominion over Ireland. The English Minister could not answer the book, and, like Omer, he burned it. The population of Ireland had since doubled, and now, in an age of science and knowledge, all the powers of nature were being made subservient to the use and benefit of man; but the great mass of that population were living in hovels not fit for the beasts that perished. Rents must be paid, taxes must be paid, and what remained to support life? One vegetable product alone.

“Turn from the physical to the moral and political condition of Ireland. She had not been allowed to educate and develop herself by her own talents, her own spirit, her own industry. An education had been forced on her from without by a country which studied to check a growth which she feared. She was seized in an age of weakness, and thrust out of the sphere of light. The education of a people was not the changing of a garment, the cutting of a beard, or a *culun*, its substitution of the English for the Brehon law, the gibbet for the eric, or even the foundation of Protestant charter schools or an ecclesiastical seminary for priests. The education of a people was the formation of its intellectual, its moral, and its political character, measured by its advancement in manners, in science, in arts and literature, in manufactures, in industry and commerce, by the general diffusion of knowledge and virtue, and the comforts, conveniences, and refinements of existence. But these blessings only came to nations possessing some common and invigorating principle of life and action. What was this common invigorating principle? Country: the proud feeling of national existence, by means of which every success is reflected from the individual to the State, and from the State to the individual; and virtue, fame, and fortune are enjoyed by the possessor in the twofold character of a man and a citizen. A free State and its members are one. The rulers and the ruled have no conflicting interests; a love of the commonwealth, the

fruitful source of generous sentiments and noble deeds, animates and dignifies the individual, and exalts the social above the selfish affections. But where this common and invigorating principle is wanting—where a people is subservient to the will, mocked by the pride, and ruled by the caprice, the passions, and the interests of another State—that people will inevitably betray the vileness of its condition. National independence does not necessarily lead to national virtue and happiness, but reason and experience demonstrate that public spirit and general happiness are looked for in vain under the withering influence of provincial subjection. The soil of Attica was still warmed by the same sun which fostered the genius of Phidias and Pericles, but liberty was gone, and the glory which adorned that rugged and scanty territory now only lives in the records of fame. For many a long century Ireland had been schooled and scourged as a province, and she wandered through a dreary existence without the central principle of light and warmth. It was not the sword which destroyed the body, as much as the policy that laid waste the mind, which Ireland had reason to deplore. A light once shone across its gloom—bright and glorious, but transient—only serving to show the darkness that had gone before and the darkness that followed. That light was extinguished by the foulest means that fraud or tyranny ever practised; and now it seemed any attempt to rekindle it was to be treated as sedition, and the sentence of dependence and degradation pronounced against Ireland to be confirmed and made perpetual. Against this sentence his client had raised his voice; and not only on his client's behalf, but on behalf of an injured and insulted country, he exhorted the jury to avert that sentence. He did not ask their verdict as the boon of mercy or the safety valve of doubt, but as an unequivocal expression of their regard for the rights of nature and the welfare and honour of their native land."

The Chief Justice, in his charge to the jury, put the claims of England over Ireland in a more trenchant shape than Mr. Holmes had ventured on. It made no difference, he told them, whether the armies alluded to in the article meant her Majesty's troops in furtherance of the law, or in violation of it. It would be equally seditious in either case to say that they might be resisted. The jury could not agree. After being locked up four and twenty hours without food or drink they were discharged. Five were for acquittal, seven for conviction.

SECTION IV.

Holmes' speech was a voice from '98, encouraging and defending Young Ireland. The opposition to the Union had been Protestant. The first attempt to repeal it had been Protestant. In 1810 the Orange Corporation of Dublin passed a resolution against the Union by a majority of thirty. The grand juries of Dublin sent a requisition to the sheriffs to call a meeting for considering the necessity that existed of petitioning for a repeal of the Union. The freedom they sought was for the privileged few. O'Connell delivered a speech at the meeting that made the demand for repeal his and Ireland's. Now that an extreme section of his followers threatened to revolt from his temperate and con-

stitutional agitation, the voice from the past came to their aid. It shows that there are two motives for repeal which England has to contemplate, and two measures of it between which she has to choose. In these indications we see the true root of the growing disunion of the Repeal Association. The association owed its main support to the Roman Catholic clergy, and the vast mass of its members were Roman Catholics. Zeal for their religion was one of the strongest ingredients in their passionate attachment to O'Connell. Sound policy would have sought to supplement this fervour, not to supplant it by a weaker if more comprehensive principle. But the tone of Young Ireland journalism was, speaking not theologically but politically, latitudinarian: for the religious they would have substituted a martial inspiration; and they unquestionably, whether they consciously intended it or not, aimed at getting the association under their own management, and effecting the separate independence of their country. In all these particulars they directly opposed O'Connell's most cherished convictions. The dispute was made to turn on the question of physical force in seeking political changes. This, as a matter of fact, however it is to be explained, resolved itself into a question of creed. The very essence of O'Connell's agitation was its strictly pacific character. We cannot wonder at his precision and his insistence on this point. In this lay the charm not only of his invincibility but of his invulnerability. The legality of the association depended on its absolutely disowning physical force in the accomplishment of its ends. Reports were industriously spread in England that the Irish people were preparing for an insurrection. "In the midst of the most horrible starvation," it was said, "a universal mania has arisen for the possession of firearms, to so great an extent that the gun trade at Birmingham has experienced a great revival, and the old store-shops have been cleared of their entire stocks. The peasantry are mostly to be seen armed, and instances have occurred of men bringing pigs to market armed with a gun and with a cartridge box at their side. In Clonmel it is stated that 1,138 stand of arms were disposed of in a few days. A large number of the purchasers of them were persons employed on the public works; and the arms were paid for in the silver just delivered by the Government officers superintending the public works! A letter says: 'The peasantry are armed, or are arming, almost to a man. The stores of the armourer are more frequently exhausted than the provision stores. Auctioneers, with carts laden with Birmingham arms, attend almost every fair or market in the county of Cavan and the adjoining counties. The rapidity with which they are sold is quite astonishing. A stranger would think the dread invader of our country was not famine, but a hostile armada.'" An account of an auction is thus given: "So crowded was the meeting, so anxious were the peasantry to secure arms, the competition for guns, pistols, powder, and percussion caps was so great, that the auctioneer had some difficulty in providing a supply for the demand; guns and pistols being purchased the moment they were put up to auction. In fact, the country people, who crowded the town, marched off all armed."¹ It is needless to point out the motives or the

¹ Annual Register, 1846, p. 196.

effects of fabrications of this kind. But it is obvious that a political organisation which enrolled under its banner the persons who are described as using the money supplied for food in purchasing arms, could scarcely go to too great lengths to guard itself from danger. The publication of Mr. Holmes' speech was recommended in the Repeal Committee. O'Connell prevented this from being done, but at a meeting of the 82 Club, where he occupied the chair as president, its immediate issue at a nominal price was ordered. On the accession of the Whigs to office, O'Connell's alliance with them was resented and resisted by the Young Irelanders with greater animosity than had ever been exhibited in England against the Lichfield House compact. It is unnecessary to go into the general merits of the question. O'Connell's action was in perfect consistence with his previous conduct and his avowed policy. He always declared that his object was to effect a real union, with equal law and equal franchise in the two countries. The literary clique who had grown up in the association demanded that there should be no connection with the Ministry, and that the re-election of Sheil should be opposed by bringing forward a repeal candidate. The control of the movement must not be left in O'Connell's hands; that was their requirement. O'Connell used his influence indirectly to allow Sheil's unopposed return, and in self-defence brought forward his peace resolutions, binding the association to strictly peaceful methods in pursuing its objects. These were passed on the 13th of July, 1846, Mr. Meagher alone dissenting. An article in the *Nation* immediately followed, opening up the whole question, as if the peace resolution was a political axiom, and not a legal precaution. He argued that in the agitation of '43 the under-purpose of armed revolution was generally understood. On the 27th a letter was read at the association from O'Connell, in which he declared that it was impossible for those who stood on the constitution of the Repeal Association to co-operate with those who advocated physical force. The subject did not admit of compromise. Those peaceful doctrines involved every case except defiance against unconstitutional violence. He was able to report that the Government would no longer exclude Repealers from promotion in the profession, and it was probable the Chancellor would restore the superseded magistrates. A debate ensued, which was adjourned till the next day. Then Meagher delivered a speech which attracted much attention at the time. "There were times and places," he said, "that demanded force. Opinions might operate against opinions, but force must be used against force. The soldier is proof against an argument, but he is not proof against a bullet. The man that will listen to reason, let him be reasoned with; but it is the weaponed arm of the patriot that can alone avail against battalioned despotism. Then, my Lord Mayor, I do not disclaim the use of arms as immoral, nor do I believe it is the truth to say that the God of Heaven withholds His sanction from the use of arms. From the day in which, in the valley of Bethesda, He nerved the arm of the Jewish girl to smite the drunken tyrant in his tent, down to the hour in which He blessed the insurgent chivalry of the Belgian priests, His almighty hand hath been stretched forth from the throne of light to consecrate the flag of freedom—to bless the patriot's sword. Be it for the defence, or be it for the assertion of a

nation's liberty, I look upon the sword as a sacred weapon. And if, my lord, it has sometimes reddened the shroud of the oppressor, like the anointed rod of the high priest, it has, at other times, blossomed into flowers to deck the freeman's brow. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord; for in the craggy passes of the Tyrol it has cut in pieces the banner of the Bavarian, and won an immortality for the peasant of Innspruck. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord; for at its blow a great nation sprang up from the waters of the Atlantic, and by its redeeming magic the fettered colony became a daring free republic. Abhor the sword and stigmatise the sword? No, my lord; for it scourged the Dutch marauders out of the fine old towns of Belgium back into their own phlegmatic swamps, and knocked their flag, and laws of sceptre, and bayonets into the sluggish waters of the Scheldt. My lord, I learned that it was the right of a nation to govern itself, not in this hall, but upon the ramparts of Antwerp. I learned the first articles of a nation's creed upon those ramparts, where freedom was justly estimated, and where the possession of the precious gift was purchased by the effusion of generous blood. My lord, I admire the Belgians; I honour the Belgians for their courage and their daring; and I will not stigmatise the means by which they obtained a citizen king, a Chamber of Deputies"——

Here Mr. John O'Connell interrupted the speaker. The sentiments avowed by Mr. Meagher, he declared, were directly opposed to those of the founder of the association, and the association must cease to exist, or Mr. Meagher must cease to be a member of it. Smith O'Brien now interfered. He expressed his opinion that the course of argument adopted by Mr. Meagher was perfectly fair and legitimate. The Irish people were charged with being willing slaves to any despot who might obtain the reins of power at a particular moment. He now asked the meeting were they going to fortify the assertion of their enemies by putting down the man who was endeavouring calmly and dispassionately to discuss a question which he was compelled to discuss? Meagher attempted to resume his speech, but John O'Connell rose at the same time, and said that it was not a question whether the meeting should put down Mr. Meagher, but whether Mr. Meagher should put down the association. O'Brien got up and left the hall. He was accompanied by Meagher, Duffy, Mitchel, P. T. Smyth, Fr. Meehan, and Devin Reilly. The secession was complete.

SECTION V.

The right of appeal to arms on the part of a misgoverned people is universally but tacitly admitted. It is the common law of subjects, the free will of states. But its previous publication is manifestly illegal. It is an assault on law by words instead of deeds, and invites attack at a time when repression is easiest. Otherwise its assertion or reservation is a matter of not the slightest consequence, because it is made good by fighting, and not by speaking. Discussion only makes doubtful what in practice no one doubts. Needlessly protruded as a thesis, it shakes confidence in governments, and exposes loyalty to suspicion. We lay it down

as a formal rule that under no circumstances should a lie be uttered. But at the same time everyone feels that there are occasions when a departure from literal veracity is allowable, if not imperative. But the man who as a matter of speculation insists on making the right to lie a rule in morals, in opposition to the rule of truth, exposes himself to suspicion. He seems to show a love of falsehood by imagining its necessity. If lying were illegal, he would expose himself to prosecution. The man or the party that openly insists on the right to rebel is taking the most effectual means of preventing the right from going beyond expression in words. Why did the Young Irelanders so pertinaciously declaim on the right of insurrection? The question goes to the root of the matter. Partly because they had come to the habit of disdaining O'Connell's safe and trite methods. But the true cause lay deeper and out of sight. Our ideas of nobleness and glory are associated with topics that lend themselves to glowing description rather than derived from a right appreciation of virtue. The scenes that fire the poet, the orator, or the painter to his most popular efforts are those of tempest in inanimate nature, and passion in man. It is not very extravagant to say that evil is the inspiration of art. A picture of Satan, written or painted, is more sublime than a picture of Christ. In some of the best Italian *cène* Judas is the most dignified of the apostles. The highest flights of oratory are outpourings of hate or invective. A curse is more sublime than a blessing. The crowd would rather gaze on a battle or a shipwreck than on the wanderings of man in the mazes of philosophic error. Nothing stirs and stimulates as war does. Nothing is so full of attractive terror and loathsomeness. Its harsh lineaments are intentionally softened by artificial accessions of pomp and colour and sound that intoxicate the senses. Its glory is near: its horror is generally at a distance. In descriptions of martial preparations and achievements emotion seeks congenial ostentation of epithets and majesty of illustration. So deeds of war seem to be the loftiest achievements, and acquisitions made in war are regarded as conferring most glory. The patriarch gives to his favoured son with manifest pride the portion which he took with his sword and his bow.¹ These considerations may explain why the party of younger men who opposed O'Connell turned their thoughts towards war, and made it a subject of declamation. Peace and policy were ignoble to them, compared with defiance and combat. The theme that cast their souls into tumult and poured their words in torrents seemed fittest and best. Their antipathy to the Whig alliance and their leaning to physical force were literary inclinations which they mistook for political convictions. To win the sisterly love of England is a performance which we cannot call glorious and sublime, because those terms are usurped by the idea of beating England in battle. Exposures to peril and privation, self-sacrifice in some form, is the only element in war connected with true greatness. But what sacrifices or sufferings of the soldier can be mentioned that can equal the life-long devotion and endurance of men who, with no bray of martial music, no rhythmic tramp of environing regiments, no flaunting banners, and no multitudinous shout filling the pause of trumpets and drums, in obscurity, tempered only by contempt and reviling, spend themselves in

¹ Gen. xlviii., 22.

efforts to persuade the reason and assuage the animosities of warring classes or nations? And here we come on another point of divergence. Peace is a Christian virtue, and O'Connell, with the best light he had, strove earnestly to be a Christian. Sincerely Christian men may, because they do, prefer war; but there is a right and wrong independent of the suffrages of parties. As a matter of fact, it may be questioned whether the public discussion about the expediency of insurrection did not exhaust the feelings that, if pent up, might have sought another deliverance. Men do not fight the better or more readily for continually thinking about it. It is a bitter potion that must be drunk without consideration. Soldiers, whose trade is war, are occupied with drill and discipline, plans and tactics, habitual and mechanical preparations. With a suffering people some wrong is silently brooded over, some growing provocation continually goads, and at last the blood-red blossom war bursts from a foliage that gave no such promise. Had the peasantry not listened so much to the arguments of their journalists, there might have been an important rising in 1847.

SECTION VI.

On the 15th of July, 1846, O'Connell accepted an invitation from the Lord Chancellor to resume the office of magistrate. Fourteen other gentlemen were restored to the commission of the peace at the same time. The legality of O'Connell's agitation for repeal was vindicated by the decision of the House of Lords; it was now fully admitted and sanctioned by the restoration of the dismissed magistrates.

After the final rupture with Young Ireland the association for a time went on its usual course. It was still supported by the mass of the nation, and, in ordinary circumstances, would have worked its way and gained its haven. But the waters were ebbing from beneath it, and its pilot was dying. O'Connell never ceased working. He attended the weekly meetings of the association, and laboured on relief committees incessantly. He was dying with his people, and working for them while he died. Early in 1847 he went to London to attend Parliament. He spoke there for the last time on the 8th of February, pleading for Ireland. "She is in your hands," he said; "she is in your power. If you don't save her, she can't save herself; and I solemnly call on you to recollect that I predict, with the sincerest conviction, that one-fourth of her population will perish, unless you come to her relief." Two days after he was taken ill. He then wrote one more letter to the association, in which, for the last time, he states the peril and the remedy: "It will not be until after the deaths of hundreds of thousands that the regret will arise that more was not done to save a sinking nation. How different would the scene be if we had our own parliament—taking care of our own people—of our own resources. But, alas! alas! it is scarcely permitted to think of these, the only sure preventatives of misery and the only sure instruments of Irish prosperity." After a month had passed he was ordered by his physicians to Hastings, and after spending a fortnight there he sailed for France, intending to go to Rome.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONFEDERATION.

SECTION I.

THE seceders founded the Irish Confederation, which held its first meeting on the 13th of January, 1847. Robert Holmes was invited to take the chair, but he pleaded his age—he was then eighty-two—in excuse. He had just written a pamphlet, which O'Brien quoted with exultation at the meeting. The new association enrolled ten thousand members. Their great hope was to win the Protestants, who now might have joined a movement to which the Catholic clergy were unfriendly. But they did not avail themselves of the occasion. The public works, on which there were in a short time as many salaried clerks employed as there ever were members enrolled by the confederation, provided a successful rival to the claims of patriotism among the educated classes. The "Irish party," which was formed at a conference of landed proprietors about the same time, utterly failed in agreeing on any substantial measure of redress. They made proposals in Dublin that seemed to renounce the supreme interests of landlordism, but when they went to England the influence of the great nobles who never visit their Irish estates raised their pretensions to their usual level. Attempts were made to reconcile the two patriotic organisations. There was mutual distrust. Certain social difficulties which had been previously ignored sprang into life on the secession, and stood in the way of reconciliation; and the Protestant Nationalists were very averse to return to the association, which was now more under the control of the priests than before. Delegates from both sides met on May the 4th. It was proposed to dissolve the association and confederation and form a new body. John O'Connell would not consent to the dissolution of the Repeal Association. He was willing to make some concession on the peace resolutions, but further he could not go in his father's absence. "Within the last ten days," he said, "a marked change has set in, and though not so rapidly as to predict a speedy return to this hall, yet we trust, under the providence of God, that many months will not elapse—even if the improvement be only at the present rate—before he will return to Ireland." The association rested on its oars, and the confederation made desperate efforts to increase its numbers by personal canvass. Then news came suddenly that O'Connell was dead. He had arrived at Genoa on the 6th of May, and quietly died there on the 15th. He only died: he did not fail. He left his work unfinished, it is true; but it was his work which other men were to take up and carry to completion in good time. Opposition and worry and the famine hastened his end. One morning, after some great effort made by the seceders, he refused, it was said, to eat his breakfast. This is the way in which the bolts of rivalry strike to the heart. Men aim blows at each other in the great arena of public life, and the wound is received amid the family

group, by the household hearth, in the sanctuary of home. If the combatants thought of this, would they relent, or do they strike with this intent? The latest directions of the great leader were that his heart should be sent to Rome. His death took the country by surprise. We murmur and complain because the sun is hid in clouds, and then the luminary sets, and we are in darkness.

It has been denied that O'Connell was a great man. He was not great in the sense in which one who excels in some particular department of knowledge or action is called great. He is better described by the word vast. He was greater than other men as the star is greater than the planet, and the planet than the satellite. The power he exercised was not magnetic, but gravitative. He was composed of the same elements, and in the same proportions, as other men, but all was on a larger scale. So it was that he was tender-hearted as a woman. Had he been ten years younger, and retained his powers in their compactness, he could have defied the famine and the secession. But his powers were failing and beginning to disintegrate from long incessant toil, and his enemies, in judging him, to use a common but significant phrase, took him to pieces, and found each part commonplace. They left out of the account that there were materials in him for a hundred men. They forgot what he did and what he was conditioned to do—that he was morally a giant among men, swaying them by the moral magnitude of his bulk and stature. He united Ireland. He showed that it had the capability of union. He gave it the power of rising to the voice of one man. He infused the spirit which keeps the pulses of Irishmen in all parts of the globe beating to one measure. He helped to preserve the integrity of the American Republic by teaching Irishmen what side to take in the war against slavery. He took the cause of his country's independence out of the hands of a faction, and made it the life of the nation. He was United Ireland. His death initiated a period of disunion. This is the momentous historical lesson it bequeathed. While men were content to act their several parts in subordination to him, all prospered. But the Young Ireland party aspired to play each an independent part, and they helped to dethrone him. And then it soon became every man for himself. The history for a while became a scramble of individuals. The qualities that were balanced principles in him ran to seed in the men that came after him, and produced a crop of inefficient leaders, vain pretenders, unprincipled place-hunters, and conspirators, false even to conspiracy. Then the nation saw that it was union first and chief of all that it needed, and that it must find not perfection in a chief, but subordination in itself. And though the tides that O'Connell's attraction had raised were subsided, the nilometer of their flow remained, a standard and an incentive.

SECTION II.

The Rev. John Kenyon, of Templeberry, was an extreme specimen of the type of Independents. He had opposed O'Connell on the subject of the provincial colleges. He pointedly resisted him on the peace resolutions. He publicly renounced his leadership while living. He now, when it was proposed that the Confederates should attend his funeral in

a body, wrote a letter, in which he fiercely refused to be a party to it. The publication of such a letter in the *Nation* showed how far the animosity to O'Connell had been allowed to grow in the secession party, and how completely they misunderstood the feelings of the country. It would have been enough to ruin their cause even had it been a better one. The few gentry and Orangemen, who in their hatred to O'Connell had coquetted with federalism, and the Confederates had no longer a motive for such an alliance. A few landlords and other gentlemen met and formed an "Irish Council," but the topics that inevitably arise in such a crisis terrified them back into private life. In the summer of this year (1847) Lord Clarendon came as Viceroy on the death of Lord Bessborough. He promoted a lecture-mission through the country on agricultural subjects. The poor people told the lecturers that they were destitute of the materials on which to practise the good advice proffered to them, and that they were about to be turned out of their lands. The lecturers replied that they had nothing to do with that, but they were sent by some kind gentleman barely to tell them what course to pursue. A newspaper called the *World* was privately paid to make attacks on the Young Irelanders. Mr. Monahan, a Catholic, was made Attorney-General. On the 5th of August O'Connell's funeral took place in Dublin. It was the largest ever seen, at least in Ireland, and never was public sorrow more sincerely displayed.¹ Attacks now began to be made on the Confederates by mobs, and some of them began to consult with each other whether they had not done enough, and might not now give up their undertaking as impracticable. The general election came on. The Repeal Association and the Confederates issued addresses. The influence of the former predominated. John O'Connell was returned for Limerick and Kilkenny, Sheil was elected for Dungarvan. Mr. W. Keogh was returned as an independent member for Athlone. The Confederates made desultory efforts. They sent a deputation to the North, but their meeting was disturbed by Old Irelanders. The Catholics of this body prepared a memorial defending themselves from the charge of infidelity, for presentation to the annual assembly of bishops. The Archbishop of Tuam declared he would retire if they were admitted. Literary intercourse with Thackeray, Carlyle, and Mr. Owen Madden was no substitute for political strength. They compared themselves to Wolfe Tone. But he offered privileges to the Roman Catholics, while they demanded surrender of privileges from the Protestants. Fierce rivalries broke out among the juniors of the party, and were only latent among the elders. A young man named Lalor, in the Queen's County, cut off from intercourse with the world by physical infirmities, concentrated an eager intellect on the national condition, and believed that he had discovered the truth. Independence, not repeal, was the definite object for which the battle should be fought, and the method which would turn every tenant in Ireland into a soldier was a general refusal to pay rents. Mitchel was charmed with this scheme, and presented it in a modified form in the *Nation*. O'Brien, on the other hand, waited in expectation that the heavens of landlordism would voluntarily descend. Duffy hoped for much from the sympathy of foreign

¹ Ann. Reg., 1847, p. 99.

nations, and had no trust in a peasant rising. The promulgation of these revolutionary ideas alarmed the enemy. The Irish gentry volunteered addresses denouncing repeal, pledging themselves to maintain the Union, and seeking protection. "S. G. O." wrote in the *Times*: "Lord John may safely believe me when I say that the prosperity—nay, almost the very existence—of many insurance societies, the positive salvation from utter ruin of many, very many mortgagees, depends on some instant steps to make life ordinarily secure in Ireland. Of course, I only mean life or that class of it in which individuals affect insurances and give mortgages." Constabulary and military forces were increased in the collection of rents. The *Nation* urged that ten times the whole British army could not act as bailiffs everywhere at once. Parliament was called together on the 18th of November, 1847. The Queen's Speech asked for further precautions against the perpetration of crime in certain parts of Ireland. Lord Stanley said that the state of Ireland was worse than civil war. Lord Brougham declared that Ireland stood in a hateful and shameful pre-eminence of crime. In the Commons the mover of the Address observed that the atrocious crimes which had recently disgraced Ireland must be put an end to by vigorous measures of repression before remedial measures for its social regeneration could have any chance of success. The seconder went into a lengthy discussion on the sufferings and crimes of the people of Ireland. His heart positively sickened over the horrible and astounding murders which were now so frequent in that country. To render life desirable it must be rendered sacred; and if such crimes could not be repressed by the judges' ermines, they must be repressed by the soldiers' bayonets. On the 29th of November Sir George Grey brought forward a Coercion Bill. Mr. Horsman argued that the poor creatures who committed the outrages were not the parties most to be blamed. He had been told that the priests denounced from the altar certain individuals as the poor man's enemies. Again, the rich man ejects the inhabitants of whole villages, and burns the houses over their heads. Unless other measures accompanied this bill, we should be only eradicating the symptoms and leaving the malady untouched. In England, where Protestantism is the rich man's religion, it is difficult to realise the position of priests in Ireland, where Catholicism is the poor man's religion. The rich men were burning the houses over the heads of the poor. The ministers of Him who spoke the parable of Lazarus were bound to interfere. Sir R. Peel agreed that measures of this kind were no remedies for social evils, but if there was a conspiracy for the destruction of human life, that must first be dealt with. He intimated his opinion that it would be better to have a measure regulating the possession of arms throughout the whole of Ireland, than a fragment of a bill enabling the Viceroy to disarm the inhabitants of certain disturbed districts. He also recommended the institution of a detective police in Ireland. In these proposals we have the unblushing programme of the meanest tyranny and the most degrading slavery that ever humanity was cursed with. There are forms of servitude in which the slave accepts his position and preserves a measure of independence on the faith of a common understanding. He can think his own thoughts without feeling the chain there. But in the slavery which Peel prepared here is every element of hardship, indignity, wrong, and torture that

man can devise against men. It has been ever since formalised and established in Ireland. The slave there cannot think his own thoughts. The spy is on his track, watches his steps, notes his idle words, chronicles his movements, his acquaintanceships, his suspected plans. He must not murmur or resist, because the province of Government is not to listen to complaints, but to silence them—not to relieve the struggle of distress, but to punish it. Only fourteen members voted against the third reading.

Dublin city at this time was ablaze with gaiety and festive enjoyment. The streets were crowded with splendid equipages, the theatres and concert-rooms had never been filled with such brilliant throngs. The Young Irelanders rivalled the public displays of the ruling class by periodical festivities within their own circle. The young men who led the secession aspired to a higher social position than the platform of the association supplied. O'Connell laid the basis of a national, popular, social status apart from and in opposition to the caste that prided itself on its intimacy with the representatives of English authority. This is one of the most important aspects of his work, and Ireland will never be independent until the structure he founded be healthily and honourably built. Through a secret disdain at the unworthiness of the object men conceal how large a share social distinctions have in political enterprises and revolutions. In the last analysis social jealousy is the most urgent motive in the struggle between the Liberals and Conservatives of England, the Nationalists and Anti-Nationalists of Ireland, and the Unionists and Repealers of both countries. Next to measures of obvious political justice, the most pressing requirement for Irishmen is to establish an Irish social position that will shame the pretensions of mere exclusiveness, and the most essential duty for England is to satisfy the legitimate social aspirations of all classes of Irishmen. The Young Irelanders betrayed the weak side of the artistic nature, and turned in thought to the flesh-pots of Egypt. The easy lives and haughty airs of the Castle aristocracy provoked at once imitation and aversion. They contended against the aloofness of the charmed circle, but more to force an entrance than to abolish the institution.

SECTION III.

The seceders had calculated on rousing the masses by the force of ideas. They now discovered the hopelessness of such a project. Truth prevails by the ability and the efforts of its preachers. How was an idea to be brought home to the minds of the peasantry without an O'Connell! Mitchel recommended a general strike against poor-rates. He continued to put this forward in the *Nation*, of which he was assistant editor. It was a surrender of the educational revolution. But had they all united in it they might have succeeded, or at least have been on the road to success. O'Brien strongly opposed it at its first suggestion, and he continued to complain that the gentry were estranged and the cause ruined. Duffy at last refused to allow the further development of any such course in the *Nation*, and Mitchel threatened to retire from that journal. Further differences arose, and he retired on the instant. Devin Reilly accompanied him.

When Lalor's proposal was rejected it seemed desirable to put some alternative method before the country. The rejected plan was so good that its rejection could be excused only by finding a better one. As O'Brien was the chief objector and the leader of the party, he was requested to draw up a report on the means and agencies by which the Union might be repealed. The paper which he produced recommended only a general preparation of the public mind for any opportunity that might offer. This proposal could not answer the designed end. Mitchel, commenting on it, detailed two plans which have both been since effectually employed. The report, he said, must show, for one way, how a Parliamentary campaign, conducted honestly and boldly, might bring the state of public business in Parliament to such a position that repeal would be the only solution; for another way, how systematic passive obedience to and contempt of law might be carried out, through a thousand details, so as to virtually supersede English dominion here, and make the mere repealing statute an immaterial formality. The latter is Lalor's method, and Mitchel says that he prefers and adopts it. Duffy undertook now to prepare the required document, and when produced it embodied substantially the former of the two methods. O'Brien wrote to the secretary of the confederation, advising that Mitchel's declared opinions rendered him unfit for re-election on the council which was about to be chosen at the annual meeting (1848). When the meeting was held he moved that the doctrines contained in the letter of Messrs. Mitchel and Reilly be disavowed. Mitchel moved as an amendment that the confederation did not feel called on to promote or condemn doctrines promulgated by its members. The amendment was lost by a majority of 129. Mitchel started a weekly paper called the *United Irishmen*; the first number appeared on the 12th of February, 1848. Its professed and its obvious design was to drive things to extremities, and to force on the Government and the people into collision. Its clear and daring language, compared with which the *Nation* gave only an uncertain sound, rang like the blast of a clarion through the land, and commanded for it from the first a wide circulation. Just then the French people drove Louis Philippe from the throne and proclaimed a republic. Had Irish opinion been really inflammable, the nation would have burst into war. It merely increased its peculiar enthusiasm of poems and newspaper leaders. The shock drove the body of the confederation to the stage which they had just condemned in Mitchel, but when they sought union with him they found that it had driven him a stage further. He was now for an Irish republic. But the excitement was of a kind that never would explode in deeds. Angry discussions sometimes take place among men that naturally result in blows. But this is never the case when the speakers and writers are contending for victory against each other, with intellectual weapons, in the audience of an outer public. The Confederates relied on moral force as much as O'Connell did. The difference was that O'Connell had the nation at his back. "Your argument wants teeth and claws," said the wolf to the hare that was pleading for his life. O'Connell's argument had teeth and claws. The Confederates with one voice declared that the

time had come. Had it come, they would not have had need or time to say so. They resolved to seek reconciliation with all the other Nationalists, and negotiate with England for a peaceful settlement. But they found that no reconciliation was possible. Mitchel's policy was to put the case between England and Ireland in so plain a light that England could take no step against Ireland without putting herself morally in the wrong. He forgot that it was the English Parliament he had to deal with, and not England, and that Parliament had the power of manufacturing right and wrong so as to justify their actions. "Pack away," he wrote to the Viceroy; "pack away, then, *if you can*. I expect no justice, no courtesy, no indulgence from you; and if you get me within your power, I entreat you to show me no mercy, as I, so help me God, would show none to you." The whole party had been drinking, politically, Carlyle's adulterated temperance draughts, and Mitchel was the first to get drunk. The Confederates had clubs in Dublin and the principal towns. They were now advised to provide themselves with arms and to practice drilling. Bodies of men in quasi-military array might be seen exhibiting themselves in the streets. On the other side armies of detectives were busy suggesting crimes and urging to excesses. And so little real preparation for war was there on the Irish side that Government were compelled to manufacture a semblance of it. A Castle agent ordered a blacksmith to make half a dozen pikeheads. He was watched by the Nationalists and prosecuted. When on the high road to transportation the Chief Commissioner of Police claimed him as one of his hired spies. Soldiers were stationed in all the public buildings, the Custom House, the Old Parliament House, the University. The College Chapel presented the edifying sight of a congregation of soldiers stolidly looking at a preacher delivering a metaphysical disquisition on the Christian Evidences. The Orangemen were supplied with arms. Instead of a brooding crowd, a silent conspiracy, a sudden cry and rush to arms, the rehearsal of a great international combat was elaborately got up, and the two nations stood in the field confronting each other—the armed troops of England, and the visions of a handful of Irish essayists and poets.

The Confederate leaders consulted together, and resolved to procure funds and military aid from America, and to demand the establishment of the Constitution of '82. If this was denied, the green flag was to be unrolled. But O'Brien still was unwilling to move till the gentry came to their ranks. On Wednesday, March the 15th, 1848, a great meeting of Confederates was held. O'Brien said that they must not waste a moment. He proposed the enrolment of a national guard, and the election of a council of three hundred. For foreign policy they must fraternise with the English Chartists, and above all with the people of France. They would probably send a *députation* to the United States, and recommend the formation of an Irish brigade there. The people should cultivate friendly relations with the Irishmen in the British army, and with their countrymen in the constabulary. This plan required impetus, which Meagher supplied: "Let the demand for the reconstruction of Ireland's nationality be constitutionally made. Depute your worthiest citizens to approach the throne, and before that throne let the

will of the Irish people be uttered with dignity and decision. If nothing comes of this ; if the Constitution opens to us no path to freedom ; if the Union will be maintained in spite of the will of the Irish people ; if the Government of Ireland insist upon being a Government of dragoons and bombardiers, of detectives and light infantry—then up with the barricades, and invoke the God of battles ! Should we succeed—oh ! think of the joy, the ecstasy, the glory of the old Irish nation, which in that hour will grow young and strong again ! Should we fail, the country will not be worse than it is now. The sword of famine is less sparing than the bayonet of the soldier.” A congratulatory address was sent to France from this meeting. O’Brien and Meagher were deputed to present it. After a few days those two gentlemen and Mitchel were required to give bail that they would stand their trial on a charge of sedition—O’Brien and Meagher for speeches made at the meeting, Mitchel for articles in the *United Irishman*. The deputation went to Paris, and met with no encouragement. Lamartine had been warned that the embassy would be withdrawn if he encouraged agitation in the British empire. He had as little idea of fighting as his brother sentimentalists in Ireland.

SECTION IV.

In April Sir George Grey introduced a bill, by which writing or speaking with a view to excite sedition was constituted a new crime, called treason felony, punishable by penal servitude. On the 10th of April, Smith O’Brien, returning from Paris, entered the House during the debate on the second reading, and addressed it for the last time. He had in his absence, he said, been called a traitor. Loud shouts of confirmation arose. The Irish Confederation, he continued, were about to appoint a National Council, and he recommended Lord John Russell to enter into negotiation with that council. Loud laughter was excited by this proposal. He repelled the charge of being a traitor, and retorted it on the head of him who made it. He sat down amidst a torrent of yells and hootings that seemed uncontrollable, and threatened some catastrophe. If a native of any other subject country than Ireland, rebelling against tyranny such as England exhibits towards Ireland, could have made his appearance in the House of Commons, he would be received with thunders of applause. This is the profession of the House ; its reception of O’Brien is its practice. Such scenes bring the position of the Irish members in the English Parliament into its true light. If one man may be shouted down by noise and uproar, one man has a perfect right to shout down the whole House in return, if he is able to do it, by noise and uproar. If it be allowable to shout down one man, it is allowable to shout down a hundred men ; and it is perfectly allowable for the hundred men to shout down the rest of the House. If the Irish members, or a portion of them, liable to such suppression by mere brutal cries and gestures, can devise any method in which by noise and interruption they can succeed in silencing or thwarting the other members, they have a perfect right to practise it. Argument should be met by argument ; but if the right of hatred and scorn be asserted, a small minority, or a single man, may fling it back. O’Brien erred

deeply to his own cost ; but if he stood on the scaffold, about to expiate his offence, no mob of the English commonalty would treat him as he was treated by the English Senate when he attempted to speak for his starving countrymen. Englishmen are humane and conscientious, and when they find themselves in circumstances that compel them to be unconscientious, or to admit themselves to be in the wrong, they are enraged with their victims. Sir Robert Peel blossomed into figure and parable in his approval of the bill. He thought it right that men who had not the dignity of traitors should be reduced to the position of felons. He would put a stop to those frogs that were croaking sedition in the marshes, and would not allow them to puff themselves into the dimensions of the nobler animals that bellowed treason. Neither Sir Robert Peel, nor the United Parliament, nor any legislative body that ever existed, or ever can exist, has or can have the authority to enact that any offences are disgraceful save such as are disgraceful in themselves, and these do not require to be characterised even when a parliament is guilty of them. The bill was supported by several repeal members ; and a meeting of Irish peers and members, including John O'Connell, O'Gorman Mahon, Sir Lucius O'Brien, and John Sadlier, offered its services to the Government in defending the institutions of the country.

It is not always quite easy to distinguish, in value, events that, while startling and picturesque, because they are exceptional, do not make history, from other events which, because they are trivial and commonplace, are parts and indications of the main stream. The former should be mentioned only to declare their unimportance, notwithstanding the attention they attracted at the moment, and still seem to deserve. A Protestant Repeal Association was formed in Dublin. One or two Catholic lords are said to have warned Lord John Russell to make concessions. Twenty-nine Orangemen were expelled from their lodge for associating with Repealers. These are straws that did not tell how the stream ran.

Smith O'Brien was one of the most unfortunate of men. He was haughty and vain, and always overestimated his importance. He joined the Nationalist party not so much because the claims of his country were neglected as because his enforcement of them was not attended to. It is painful to write thus of him, and if his character left no warning, it would be more grateful to say no more of him than that he was an honourable and high-minded gentleman. But this was not merely his character ; it became his reputation. He grew morbidly conscious that men watched his words and actions for displays of pure and lofty principle. And so he spoke and acted for effect. He was not a hypocrite, but he was ostentatious of his real qualities. His social position and proud bearing gave him undue weight in council, and the Young Irelanders, instead of catching the spirit of a statesman, deferred to an aristocrat. Small things fostered his vanity, and, by an adverse fate, great things wounded it. He sought admiration, praise, distinction, respect ; he sought them with unbounded desire, and the storm of contempt and hate that buffeted him in the House of Commons pursued him for years, and only settled down into a steady breeze at last. But his infirmities are to be taken into account only by his friends, and as a lesson for future times. They are no excuse for his enemies. Their

injustice remains as great as before, and seems greater when we see it bringing disaster on so sensitive and aspiring a nature as his. He was a martyr, and they were cruel in proportion to his capabilities of suffering, for his cause was just; and when we reflect on the provocations that goaded him to rebellion, we single him out from the herd of his class and honour his personal weaknesses as public virtues. The secession which he caused was the first fatal step. It made men who were invaluable as subordinates destructive as leaders.

When the deputation returned to Dublin some steps were taken towards the enrolment of a National Guard and the election of the Council of Three Hundred. The Viceroy forbade both by proclamation. O'Brien then resolved to go to the chief towns of Munster on a visit of inspection, declining the proposed companionship of Mitchel. A *soirée* was proposed for his reception in Limerick, to which Mitchel was invited. The place of meeting was assailed by an infuriated mob of Old Irelanders, and in attempting to appease the tumult O'Brien was severely beaten. He was with great difficulty dissuaded from retiring immediately and wholly from public life. The attack was partly attributable to the presence of Mitchel, who had lately disparaged the memory of O'Connell. He and Reilly now withdrew from the confederation.

SECTION V.

On the fifteenth of May, O'Brien was brought to trial. He was defended by Butt, who told the jury that their verdict must be grounded on public considerations. This meant that they must come to a decision not on legal technicalities, but with regard to the public welfare. This was true constitutional doctrine, and England owes much of her liberties to the fidelity with which her juries have acted upon it. But all depended on the opinion that prevailed among the jury concerning the public welfare; that is, all depended on how far it was composed of friends of the Government. Butt reminded them in the plainest and most emphatic language that they, and they alone, were judges whether the speech charged against the prisoner was seditious or not. He would like to know if in England it was said, "The right to make laws for Englishmen belongs to England, and to the people of no other country," would the Attorney-General dare to stand up in an English court, and call upon an English jury to convict the man who had said so? "Gentlemen of the jury," he said, in conclusion, "proclaim that the day for insulting Ireland has gone by, and tell the British Minister that he is a traitor to the Queen who advises her to found the British power in Ireland upon any other than the affections of the Irish people." The jury could not agree; one, or at most two, were for an acquittal. Meagher's trial then came on, with a similar result. When the jury were asked by the judge whether they were likely to agree, the foreman answered that they were not. "We are all agreed, my lord," said one of the jurors, "but one, and he is a Roman Catholic." The anti-popular and anti-pacific party in England maintain their policy in Ireland by packing juries with the adherents of their faction, and they enforce their power to do this by the sword. The influence of a Liberal Government, who were bound to observe some Liberal traditions,

prevented too glaring an exclusion of the nation in those two cases. In the next case the Viceroy acted on his own responsibility.

SECTION VI.

Before proceeding to Mitchel's trial, it is fit to remind ourselves that a famine of unspeakable horrors was desolating the country—a famine not caused by a deficiency of produce, but by the maintenance at the point of English bayonets of the principle that the landlord's rent is of more importance than the tenant's life. This famine has been alluded to with studied moderation and reserve. Its sickening details would quench all other feelings in disgust towards the sufferers. Such is our nature, and we must take account of it. The man or the nation that can drive another man or nation to the depths of misery and crime has won the last victory in the suffrage of human feelings. We despise failure and defeat. We loathe the mad excesses of desperate want, and refuse to examine the cause. Therefore famines have been hidden out of sight in this history. But we cannot extend this mode of treatment to the crimes of Irishmen during the famine. For when political crime is the recoil, and only escape from abasement and despair, it is not chargeable on the actual perpetrators nor loathsome in itself. Concurrently with the famine, a Special Commission for the trial of offenders was decimating the men who frantically resisted the famine. They resisted it simply in the same way that England inflicted it, by force. The Special Commission was opened in Limerick. A special jury, consisting of the principal resident gentry, was summoned, and they all attended. The Chief Justice, in his address to the grand jury, explained that a Special Commission implied great danger, and unless this danger could be arrested the very bonds of their social system would be dissolved. The principal object of the combination that existed was the destruction of the rights of the landlords. "In considering," he continued, "how far the calamity under which this country has by the providence of God"—

I pause here for a moment. I pause in indignation at the dishonour and outrage done to the Divine Being by ascribing to Him the calamity that was inflicted for the preservation of unjust rule in the name of Political Economy. It would be a much nearer approximation to the Divine procedure to attribute the crimes which the Chief Justice was about to try to the providence of God, because they were the last struggle of humanity against brutal degradation.

"In considering," the Chief Justice said, "how far the calamity under which the country suffers has been the cause of these dreadful outrages, I am bound here to say that the patience, the fortitude, the enduring fortitude, with which the calamity has been submitted to and borne by a large part of our destitute poor appears to have been in general in the highest degree exemplary; and I do not find in the calendar before me, nor, after the experience of the last two circuits, have I been able to find, a single case in which destitution or distress arising from *the visitation of God* has in the remotest degree influenced this illegal confederacy, or stimulated any of these outrages. Gentlemen, the deplorable state of things which has obliged us to assemble has been

ascribed to various causes of a social and political character. With the investigation of those causes, and with the reasonableness of these opinions, we have now nothing to do. We have no power to investigate—no power to redress. . . . The law cannot tolerate its own violation. Wrongs there may be—injuries and sufferings there may be—all forming a just ground for complaint; but it is perfectly plain that, however these sufferings may be aggravated, they never can be alleviated or redressed by a violation of the law.”

It was obviously an unwarranted statement of the judge to say that the famine had not influenced the outrages. Men in the pangs of starvation do not commit crimes, because they have lost all strength and spirit; but their friends and neighbours who see them dying are roused by the sight to deeds of violence. O'Brien and the Young Irelanders were not driven by destitution and distress to enter on a course of sedition; but just as the murderers about to be tried were driven to crime by the sight of horrible wrongs, so he and his friends were driven to sedition by the sight of the famine, and still more by the sight of the crimes which the famine compelled. There is nothing that weighs so heavy in the scale that determines Irishmen to sympathise with Nationalism as the spectacle of Irish crime. The famine and the exile they might bear, but to behold their countrymen forced to become assassins they cannot bear. The judge admitted that there were wrongs with which he and the jury had nothing to do. Where, then, was redress to be found? In Parliament, it will be said. But it is the persistent declaration of the Tory party in Parliament, their settled and immovable policy, that crime in Ireland must never be considered in connection with its cause, but must be punished as a spontaneous and isolated phenomenon.

SECTION VII.

On the fifth of January, William Ryan was placed at the bar charged with the murder of John Kelly. The prisoner and his father held land, from which they were ejected. Kelly entered on its occupation, and was shot by the prisoner. The jury, after a few minutes' consultation, returned a verdict of “guilty.” The prisoner heard it pronounced without the slightest evident emotion. On being asked if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed on him, he only requested, if he was to die, that he might be buried with his parents. On the seventh, Andrew Dea was tried for killing Edmund Murphy. The prisoner was about nineteen years of age, but looked considerably younger. He was of small stature, with fine features, and an intelligent and pleasing countenance. He evinced not the slightest emotion. His father had been dispossessed of his land. The jury at once found him guilty. The prisoner heard the fearful announcement without moving a muscle or the slightest change of countenance. He was hanged with Ryan on the seventh of February. On the tenth of January, twenty or thirty prisoners who had been convicted were sentenced to various terms of transportation. “You are brought here to receive your sentence,” said the Judge to them, “and it is no part of my duty to rebuke or insult

you. God knows there is enough before me to prevent every feeling of resentment, and to extend to you motives of compassion and mercy if your guilt did not forbid it." The whole of the prisoners, who heard their sentences pronounced with the greatest indifference, were then removed from the dock. The court then proceeded with the trial of John Renshaw for the murder of John M'Enery. The crime arose out of some legal dispute. The prisoner was found guilty, and heard the verdict and his sentence of death with the greatest indifference. The judges adjourned the commission till the twentieth, and went to Ennis, where they opened the commission on the twelfth. The grand jury attended, as at Limerick, without a single exception. The foreman was Sir Lucius O'Brien, brother of Smith O'Brien. On the thirteenth, Patrick Ryan and James Hayes were indicted for the murder of Mr. Watson, an agent, who had distrained the property of a tenant named Crowe. The two prisoners were, it appears, employed by Crowe to commit the crime. They were found guilty, and Crowe was afterwards convicted. The chief evidence against the latter was his own admission to a man named Shaughnessy that his cattle had been distrained for rent; that he had gone to Mr. Watson and offered him a note for the money, but that Mr. Watson refused to take it; and that he "thought neither God nor man could blame him for killing him." At Clonmel, on the twenty-fifth, John Lonergan was indicted for the murder of Mr. William Roe, who had ejected him from his farm. The prisoner was a man of slight but active frame, about twenty-five years of age, with fine features and an intelligent but very stern and determined expression of countenance. His appearance betokened much mental suffering. He was found guilty. On the thirty-first, Terence Conboys was indicted for the murder of a process-server named Gleeson, and found guilty. On this day, five men "in the prime of life, in the vigour of manhood," to use the judge's words, "stood at the bar to hear the sentence by which their days would be numbered and their lives cut short." "You stand there convicted," he said, "not of murder caused by sudden resentment or excitement, or by the infirmity of our nature, but of that worst species of crime, the crime of assassination—the most horrible and hateful shape the crime of murder can assume. In the prime of manhood, you all stand there branded with the character of assassins, a disgrace to yourselves, to your country, and to your nature."

SECTION VIII.

The Attorney-General abandoned the prosecution already commenced against Mitchel, and arrested him on a charge of treason felony, under the new act. The Foreman of the Grand Jury, in returning the bill, declared the bill was for sedition; then, on correction by the Clerk of the Court, said it was for treason; and at last said, "We find for sedition, treason, or felony, or whatever it is." The trial took place on the twenty-fifth of May. Robert Holmes defended the prisoner. He objected to the array of jurors on the ground of fraud; but the clerks, who alone could substantiate the charge, had been sent to a distance, and the judge gave his opinion that the panel was a good and honest one. Notwithstanding,

the Crown challenged thirty-nine names, of which number nineteen were Catholics. All the Catholics who answered to their names were set aside. One of the facts relied on by the prosecution was the speech delivered at the *soirée* at Limerick. In this Mitchel said: "I am not here as a Jacobine (which I am not), nor as a Communist (which I am not), nor even as a Republican (which I am), but simply and merely because I am a bitter and irreconcilable enemy to the British Government." Another was an article in the *United Irishman* of May the thirteenth, which concluded in these words: "And for 'the institutions of the country,' I loathe and despise them. We are sickening and dying of these institutions fast; they are consuming us like a plague, degrading us to paupers in mind, body, and estate; yes, making our very rule beggarly and cowardly. They are a failure and a fraud, these institutions—from the topmost crown jewel to the meanest detective's note-book, there is no soundness in them. God and man are weary of them. Their last hour is at hand, and I thank God that I live in the days when I shall witness the utter downfall and trample upon the grave of the most portentous, the grandest, meanest, cruellest tyranny that ever deformed the world." Mr. Holmes addressed the jury. A great mistake, he said, was entertained by many persons, to the effect that there cannot be slavery—that no man can be a slave unless he be in chains, or subject to the lash of the planter, like the negroes; but he said boldly, that the people who do not make the laws by which they are governed are in a state of slavery. "I say it," he proceeded, "boldly and broadly, as a man, that the Act of Union is only binding as a thing of expediency. Men will often submit to a certain order of things, rather than run the risk of subverting by force of arms the state of things as established. No man upon slender grounds should endeavour to subvert the order of things; but it is the right of an enslaved country—the laws of Providence approve the right—to arm and right itself. . . . From past times let them turn to the present time, and what did they see? An Attorney-General—an able lawyer—under a Special Commission a most successful prosecutor. Death had followed his footsteps; and it was asked ought not the assassin to suffer for his crime? Yes; but in the history of the civilised world and of free nations has there ever been a nation of assassins? No; assassination is the crime of the untutored savage or the brutalised slave. Was the assassin to suffer for his crime? Yes; but deep, deep, deep was the guilt of England, in its unprovoked invasion and unjust dominion in Ireland. At the close of seven centuries of wasting wars, wasting laws, and still more wasting policy, it was found necessary to maintain that dominion in Ireland by special commissions, State persecutions, and military force—by the gibbet, by the gaol, and by the sword. . . . Let England give to Ireland her own Parliament; not the Parliament of '82—that was a meteor light which flashed across the land—a deceptive vapour, which quickly vanished. Ireland wanted a fixed star, bright and resplendent, the cordial influence and reflecting radiance of which might be seen and felt in the glorious union of liberty, happiness, and peace. But it was urged that if they did that, it would lead, as Lord Althorp had said, to separation, and that Ireland would be erected into a separate, independent state. And suppose it did; who was to blame for that?

England! What right had England—what right had any country—to build its greatness upon the slavery, degradation, and wretchedness of another?"

There are men—and they are chiefly to be found in what are called the better ranks of society—excellent men, religious men, moral men, kind men, and if all mankind were like them, they would have no such thing as liberty in the world. Peace in their time is their first prayer, and their highest aspiration to enjoy the good things of this life. They were consoled for the misfortunes of others by the reflection that the sufferer here is only in a state of trial on his passage to another world—that other world where the tyrant must account for his oppression, and where the slave will be released from bondage. "Oh, Ireland! Ireland! Ireland! you are weak; you struggle to be free from your slavery, and the enslaver kills you because you struggle." That was British conquest and dominion in Ireland—that was British legislation in Ireland.

SECTION IX.

The jury deliberated for nearly three hours and a half, and returned a verdict of "Guilty." Their names have a strange significance on the trial of an Irish Nationalist in the middle of the nineteenth century: Rambaut, Yoakley, Bridgeford, Collier, Rothwell, Fletcher, Sherwood, Nelson, &c., &c. When Mitchel was asked if he had anything to say, he answered: "I have to say that I have been found guilty by a packed jury—by the jury of a partisan sheriff—by a jury not empanelled even according to the law of England. I have been found guilty by a packed jury, obtained by a juggle—a jury not empanelled by a sheriff, but by a juggler." The sheriff claimed the protection of the court, and Baron Lefroy interposed, and sentenced the prisoner to transportation for fourteen years. "The law has now done its part," the prisoner replied, "and the Queen of England, her crown, and Government are now secure, pursuant to Act of Parliament. I have done my part also. Three months ago I promised Lord Clarendon, and his government in this country, that I would provoke him into his courts of justice, as places of this kind are called, and that I would force him publicly and notoriously to pack a jury against me to convict me, or else that I would walk a free man out of this court and provoke him to a contest in another field. My lord, I knew I was setting my life on that cast, but I knew that in either event the victory would be with me; and it is with me. Neither the jury, nor the judges, nor any other man in this court presumes to imagine that it is a criminal who stands in this dock. I have shown what the law is made of in Ireland. I have shown that Her Majesty's Government sustains itself in Ireland by packed juries, by partisan judges, by perjured sheriffs. I have acted all through this business from the first under a strong sense of duty. I do not repent anything I have done, and I believe that the course which I have opened is only commenced. The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant promised that three hundred should follow out his enterprise. Can I not promise for one, for two, for three, ay, for hundreds?" John Martin, his friend to death, Meagher, and others who sat around the

dock, started to their feet in confirmation of his words, and a scene of wild confusion ensued. Meagher and one or two others were made prisoners by the police, and released after some apology or explanation. Then occurred one of those incongruities that bring men from high-wrought moods back to the commonplace with a sense of disillusionment. A black-whiskered, black-bearded gentleman addressed the judges in ferocious tones. He was, he said, an articled clerk. The judge did not understand. He repeated the expression, but with such angry rapidity that the judge was still baffled, and applied to his colleagues for help. The gentleman again said that he was an articled clerk, and complained that, though belonging to the legal profession, he had not been allowed admission to the court during the trial. The complainant was Mr. John Rae, who afterwards, as a solicitor, attained a good deal of notoriety.

SECTION X.

Had Mitchel been acquitted, it would have been a triumph of moral force; and, in fact, it was moral force on which he and the more moderate Confederates all along relied. There never had been a serious thought of fighting. On his arrest, Meagher and O'Gorman made a personal inspection of the clubs to determine whether a rescue was possible, and arrived at the conclusion that the people were wholly and in every way unprepared. And yet at that very time bodies of men were in the habit of marching through the streets of Dublin with some show of military order. On one of the days of O'Brien's trial Meagher walked at the head of his club on the quay opposite the four courts. He was supposed to be a captain at the head of his regiment. As they marched along a loud shout arose in the neighbourhood of the court from which O'Brien had just emerged. The whole regiment broke up, deserted its leader, stormed an iron toll-bridge which spans the river at that spot, and rushed to the newest attraction. Meagher vainly strove to retain even the companion on whose arm he leaned, and was left alone abashed and confounded. This was the kind of military force the authorities had to fear. Young Irelandism was in a great degree a social insurrection against the insolent airs of the official garrison and the loyal aristocracy of Dublin. Had they confined themselves within the proper lines, they could have triumphed in their real superiority.

Instead of raising rival armies they gave the victory to

Mitchel's trial was an exhibition of social arrogance. The Crown Solicitor, as he ordered the challenged jurors all of mockery and scorn. The judge's face, as a years' transportation, blazed with exulting and who sat in the sheriff's box beamed with light looked towards Mitchel, when she gazed as she sat in a cage. From this time a reign of terror policemen held the streets. Two men could not pass for a moment on the footway without the aid of a constable.

The liberties were perverted and marred by his violent hatred of England. There is an England, as there

is an Ireland, to be hated, execrated, fought against with brain and sinew by every man who believes in a God and a destiny for the human race. It is the peril and the holy dread of seeing Ireland made the instrument of this England in accomplishing its odious projects of enslavement that more than justifies the demand for repeal and the wish for separation, or union with France or America, or any other country under the sun. But Mitchel forgot, or could not see, that there is an England to be loved and died for by any Irishman who, unblinded by his country's wrongs, perceives that they are only one item in the long catalogue of sorrows which this England is striving to erase. He did not reflect that in his own time a wide and earnest struggle was going on in England—a battle for peace and equal rights, in which the great heart of O'Connell had mingled without one throb less for his own country, and that this grand cause had also its physical force advocates, who were derided and suppressed with as much severity and scorn as he suffered. He did not remember or rightly estimate the fact that his own countrymen were the men who struck him down; that the judges, law officers, and jury were Irishmen; that the police, whose bearing insulted him in the streets, that the spies who read his letters and cast their shadows on his hearth, were Irishmen. He did not reflect that the readiness of Irishmen to be bought—not the untainted and unpurchasable Irish peasantry, but Irish professional men, secretaries and committee-men—has been not so much an agency for the malice as a temptation to the virtue of England. Mitchel, after his sentence, was hurried from court and placed on board a war vessel. He expected a rescue. He tells us in his *Jail Journal* how, when he found himself shut up in his cell, he burst into tears of wrath and remorse.

The leaders of the two sections of Confederates, foremost among whom was Father Kenyon, met in conference and concerted measures to obtain money, arms, and officers from abroad, and to make a diversion in England through the Irish resident there. This was conspiracy, but it was holding the actual conflict at arms' length. It shows how little and how much O'Brien was valued that he was not made acquainted with the proceeding. His friends took the whole risk on themselves. Time after time one puts aside the prompted desire to distinguish between moral courage and physical courage. It was on the question of physical force that Young Ireland seceded from O'Connell. But physical force requires physical daring, and on this peculiar attribute they never calculated. Moral courage to any extent they possessed. They would write seditious leaders, make seditious speeches, enter into any contest with the law courts. But the further they were ready to venture in this direction the less likely were they to take the first brutal step that turns an argument into a scene of bloodshed. It was not that they were wanting in courage, but that they were under the spell of order and civilisation. To begin an insurrection, men must go back to their savage origin; and Young Ireland had been always studiously going forward. Moral and physical courage lie at opposite poles. One is a principle, the other a passion. Physical courage in its aggressive form is not fearless, but insensate, and even the bravest men have it not always at command.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE INSURRECTION.

SECTION I.

WHEN O'Connell made overtures to O'Brien for a reconciliation, the only condition he insisted on was that direct incentives to war should be avoided. A conference met and debated the terms of reunion for several days, with every promise of success. Then the proposer of the meeting declared that he had been warned by some one whose importance could not be overrated that he was on the wrong path, and that he must have a fortnight for consideration. At the end of the fortnight he announced that he would retire for a time from public life. He shut up Conciliation Hall and went on the Continent. The prospect began to grow darker and more dark around the Confederates. The French Revolution was discredited by a socialist rising, in which an archbishop was killed. The Irish gentry circulated a declaration in favour of the Government and the existing system. On Saturday, the 9th of July, Duffy was arrested under the Treason-Felony Act. On his way to Newgate he was surrounded by an immense crowd. One of the leaders got on the steps of the carriage and whispered, "Do you wish to be rescued?" "Certainly not," was the answer. Martin, who soon after Mitchell's transportation started the *Fellow* newspaper, and O'Doherty and Williams, proprietors of another paper, the *Tribune*, were also arrested. On the Monday Doheny was taken prisoner at Cashel for sedition. The people wished to rescue him, but he dissuaded them, and was admitted to bail. On Tuesday Meagher was arrested in his father's house at Waterford. The members of the clubs determined that he should be rescued. The church bells were rung and the town was soon filled with hurrying

When his carriage, guarded by troops, reached a long narrow street crossed the Suir, they found it barricaded. Meagher begged the people to desist: they refused. He then ordered the men to attack to remove the barricade. They obeyed him. "We fear we are sorry for it," they said. He was carried to Dublin and let go. A week after Doheny addressed a meeting of fifty thousand men at Levenammon, and told them to prepare to fight. O'Brien led a triumphal procession in the south. Government issued orders that persons living in proclaimed districts should give up their arms, and proclaimed Dublin, Cork, Waterford, and Drogheda. Duffy came from gaol, and Meagher from his house in Waterford, issued to the people to keep their arms, and organize. A conference of delegates met in Dublin to consider the situation. A very young man named Brennan recommended to strike at once. McGee proposed that the leading Confederates should draw lots which of them that night should publicly advise resistance to the proclamation. Dillon moved as a amendment that the people should be advised to hide their arms, and

O'Brien assented. The amendment was carried. A supreme council of five was elected. O'Brien, by his own desire, was not of the number, as he was going to the south. It made little difference, as the council never met.

SECTION II.

Lord John Russell now suspended the Habeas Corpus Act. Dillon and Meagher resolved to join O'Brien, and commence the insurrection from Kilkenny. When they reached Kilkenny, they were advised by a local Confederate that the attempt could not succeed without assistance from outside. O'Brien went to bring such assistance from Tipperary. At Callan, the entire population received him with bonfires and bands. On their way to Cashel they fell in with John O'Mahony, a gentleman farmer, educated at Trinity College, and an accomplished Celtic scholar, who advised that the insurrection should commence that night, at Carrick. There the population was wild with excitement. "It was the revolution," Meagher afterwards said, "if we had accepted." That description stands for all. The local leaders at Carrick were of opinion that an attempt to hold the town would be drowned in blood, and O'Brien did not think the place defensible. O'Mahony alone insisted on striking a blow that night, and went for men. O'Brien went to Cashel to commence the insurrection there, and after his departure O'Mahony arrived in vain with his party J. P. Smyth, who had left Dublin to escape arrest, was sent back to have the rails torn up at Thurles. Cashel was not seized, and the rails were not torn up. After O'Brien left Kilkenny, a stranger arrived there, who was mistaken for a detective with a warrant for his arrest. A young man named James Stephens, a clerk in an engineer's office, and another were sent to take the warrant from him. They went to his hotel and demanded it, on which he explained that he was a partisan of O'Brien's, and was on his way to join him. They insisted on accompanying him to test the truth of his story. He proved to be Patrick O'Donohue, a well-known Dublin club man. Stephens joined O'Brien at Cashel. As the towns refused to begin, the Confederate leaders fell back on the rural districts, and some barricades were thrown up at Mullinahone. O'Brien forbade the felling of trees across the road, without the permission of the owners. On Wednesday morning, July 26th, he went to the police barracks, accompanied by Stephens and O'Donohue, and demanded their arms. The head constable's account afterwards, on oath, was that he refused to give up the arms, and that O'Brien said he would give him an hour to consider. Another account is that the constable said it would be undignified to surrender to three or four men, but promised submission to a larger force. It is certain that O'Brien went in search of assistance, and that on his return the police and their arms were gone. His followers watched his proceedings in despair. He is described as looking throughout those scenes like a man in a dream. A story is told of a hunter who was following the tracks of a lion. He asked a woodman if he had seen them. "No," said the woodman, "but I can show you the lion himself." "Oh, no," said the hunter, "I only want his tracks." O'Brien was not afraid of the lion. He would have faced an army

in the field. He would have stood undaunted on the scaffold. But he would not come into collision with the social organisations of his country as represented by the constabulary. The police force holds Ireland, not by carbine and bayonet, but by an invisible chain that enters into men's souls. In the south of Ireland they are backed by the magistrates and local gentry, and are omniscient and irresistible. They cow the peasantry as a superstition. In the north the people are supported by the magistrates and gentry, and the policeman is nobody. That, and not race or creed, is the difference between north and south. In three provinces of Ireland no crime, or plot, or agitation, or combination has ever risen above the level of police influence and control. And neither in law court nor in field has anyone dared to expose the illusion and break the charm. The priests now interposed, and O'Brien was left with no more than fifty followers. He sat on a bank, we are told, with tears running down his cheeks. On Friday a barricade was erected at Killenale to prevent the passage of a troop of horse who were supposed to have a warrant for his arrest. On the assurance of the officer that he had no such warrant they were allowed to pass one by one. The party who raised the barricade had one rifle and two muskets. Even an incident like this roused the people, and they began to throng into the village, eager for action. O'Brien had a day or two previously refused to countenance a proclamation offering the landed property of the country as a reward to those who would fight for it, or one directing the people to live at the expense of the enemy, although it was decided not to fight for another month, until the harvest was ready. It had then been proposed that the leaders should scatter and each shift for himself till the harvest-time. But O'Brien objected strongly to their becoming fugitives. On the 28th of July he again met his principal followers in consultation at Ballingarry, and adhered more obstinately than ever to his former resolution. "Often afterwards," writes Doheny, "it was a source of melancholy pleasure to some of his comrades that he had not been induced to incur what he regarded as guilt." In all the annals of fanaticism no infatuation can be found like this. The man had broken up a peaceful organisation in the cause of war, promised war to a people in a desperate strait, went into the country to wage war, then considered it guilt to do any act of war, and the most enthusiastic advocate of his policy is grateful that he yielded to his later qualms of conscience. Secret remorse for having abandoned O'Connell was appeased by blind fidelity to his rival. The Government now offered a reward of £500 for O'Brien's apprehension, and £300 for the arrest of Meagher, Dillon, and Doheny.

SECTION III.

On the morning of the 29th O'Brien was busy drawing up a manifesto, in which he disclaimed dictatorial responsibility, and deferred all acts of government to the will of a liberated people, when the approach of a body of police was announced. It was determined to defend the village. Their force was twenty-two guns and pistols, about as many pikes and pitchforks, and seventy or eighty men and women armed with stones.¹ The police, who were about forty in number, when

¹ "Four Years of Irish History," p. 685.

they came near turned from the main road and took possession of a two-storey stone building, owned by a Mrs. McCormack. They were in expectation of a larger force, which was coming to their aid. The peasantry rushed in a body after them, and bore O'Brien with them. The police barricaded the windows, and presented their carbines. One of the leaders of the attacking party told O'Brien that the house could not be taken without a piece of artillery. O'Brien insisted that the men would surrender. Some hay was then brought out with the intention of setting it on fire, and so "smoking them out," when O'Brien interrupted, and said that Mrs. McCormack had been sent to make terms. He then went to the window sill, and, thrusting in his arm, shook hands with the police, telling them it was not their lives but their arms he wanted. At this moment some of the mob threw stones at the windows, on which the police fired, and two men fell—one killed, the other wounded. The firing continued for some time, with no further result. The priests then appeared on the scene, and the fight was over. The expected police reinforcement was seen approaching. O'Brien was induced to retire, and Stephens and McManus led off the remainder of the party without being molested. A week after O'Brien was taken prisoner at the Thurles Railway Station by an English railway officer, named Hulme. A poor woman sitting at a stall recognised him as he went to the station, and prayed blessings on him. A member of the committee of the Confederation pointed him out to the officer who captured him.

SECTION IV.

One or two explanations must accompany this bare recital of facts. Those explanations must be given in the words of Doheny. He describes the arrival of O'Brien, Dillon, and Meagher at Carrick. "Their arrival was unexpected, sudden, and startling. They had apprised no one of their approach; and no counsel had been taken or decision come to. It is needless to say that the crowd which gathered to see them came unarmed and unprepared. The speeches addressed to them were brief, determined, and to the effect. We learned, said the chiefs, that an act was passed authorising the Irish Government to seize any persons without even the imputation of a crime. You have vowed to strive with us in every extremity, and to die with us if need be. We are here to demand the redemption of your pledges. . . . The crowd answered with a loud shout. With the leaders of that crowd other thoughts were busy. . . . They thought that the preparations seemed by their very nature to preclude the possibility of success. The great argument relied on by everyone was, why should Carrick be selected?" The people were asked to die, but no one told them where, or why, or how. The people of Carrick asked why they were to begin? Every place and person asked in effect the same question. Every leader had an opportunity of making his personal rescue the first step. Each and all, men and places, waited for some other man or place to begin. The people were ready if anyone proposed something to be done; but they got disheartened when they found that all that was expected of them was to assemble daily in crowds, do nothing, and go home fasting. The real work of the Confederate leaders was that they prevented the possibility of an outbreak.

SECTION V.

The conduct of the clergy has been variously represented. The fact is that they stood aside for a time and let things take their course; but when they saw that course leading to inevitable unresisted ruin, they came to the rescue of their flocks. They could not be expected to take the initiative, but they gave ample opportunity to others. Had the people risen, the priests would not have deserted them.

O'Brien's aristocratic pretensions overwhelmed the judgment of his associates. They were proud of him after he had proved that he did not possess a single quality of a leader. There is, perhaps, no country in the world where the lines of social caste are so deep as in Ireland. The privileged class represented loyalty, the dominant religion, the landed wealth of the country. They despised the "Irish." They looked with intolerant disdain upon O'Connell. He was rearing up a rival society of the nation, when the Confederates deserted him for a single individual of the anti-national aristocracy. O'Connell's eldest son made a runaway match with the daughter of a Protestant magnate. The latter willed away his property in fourteen degrees, to prevent it from ever coming to the family of the daughter who had disgraced him. All the disgrace was suffered on the other side, and embittered O'Connell's later years, and the property was sold under the Encumbered Estates Act. But we may see from O'Brien's example what a place in the affections of Ireland the gentry might gain without surrendering an acre or a principle.

The zeal of the Young Irelanders was never confluent. They were full of mutual rivalry and mistrust. M'Gee and Reilly were at daggers drawn. Kenyon mistrusted Dillon. Doheny says that Leyne misled Meagher, and that O'Brien, in ignorance, took counsel with a traitor. Meagher, Leyne, and O'Donohue entered into negotiations with the Government; and whether terms were formally come to or not, they surrendered to the police, with the understanding that their lives would be spared.

SECTION VI.

All this while Duffy and his fellow-prisoners had been waiting ready to escape by a rope ladder when the fighting commenced. When the attempt to excite an insurrection failed, the trials began at Dublin. Duffy was first arraigned in August. This trial was suddenly stopped. He was accused of treason felony, but a letter of his had been found in O'Brien's portmanteau which involved him in treason, and he was set aside for the heavier charge. O'Doherty was then put forward, but his jury could not agree. Martin's trial was the next, on the 19th. The jury found him guilty, with a strong recommendation to mercy. He was sentenced to transportation for ten years. "My object," he said, "in all my proceedings has been simply to assist in establishing the national independence of Ireland for the benefit of all the people of Ireland—noblemen, landlords, clergymen, judges, professional men—in fact, all citizens, all Irishmen." Of all those of the Young Ireland party who had a plan no two had the same. The offer was now made to

Doherty that if he would plead guilty he would not be called up for

judgment. He refused, was tried again, and a second time the jury disagreed, four being for acquittal. There was not one Catholic on either jury. The Commission was opened at Clonmel on the 21st of September. On the 28th O'Brien was placed at the bar. His counsel pleaded that he should have received a copy of the indictment and a list of the witnesses and jurors. The Court decided that in Ireland that was a matter of favour which the Attorney-General was entitled to refuse. He did refuse it peremptorily. A verdict of guilty was found, with an earnest and unanimous recommendation that the prisoner's life should be spared. M'Manus, O'Donoghue, and Meagher were then successively tried and found guilty, with strong recommendations to mercy. They were all sentenced to death. A writ of error was tried and decided against the prisoners, first in the Queen's Bench and then before the House of Lords. On the 30th of October O'Doherty was tried for the third time and found guilty. The trial of Williams immediately followed, and ended in an acquittal, procured by the management of the Crown solicitor, who was a friend of the prisoner's father. Duffy, after five separate indictments and two trials, in which the juries could not agree, extending over nearly ten months, was set at liberty on the 10th of April, 1849. After his first trial an intimation came from the Viceroy that if he made some concession an amnesty would be extended to all the prisoners. They came together, consulted, and agreed that no concession should be made. The sentence of death against O'Brien, Meagher, M'Manus, and O'Donoghue was commuted to transportation for life.

At O'Brien's trial Sir William Napier, an Irishman, offered himself to give evidence that in 1832, during the reform agitation, he had been instigated by a Whig Minister to take the command of the artisans of Birmingham in a popular rising. The Court ruled the evidence to be inadmissible.

SECTION VII.

The continuance of the famine created new possibilities of policy and action for statesmen. It was no longer a transient flash, enlightening for an instant as it killed, but became a constant and reliable succession of lurid discharges that could be used for Government purposes, as steadily as steam or water power is used in machinery. When O'Connell was alive and the country was strong, Lord John Russell, when he took office, declared that a permanent alteration in land tenure was the one remedy for Irish discontent. Ejections of the peasantry from their holdings, he said, were the certain cause of violence and crime. He spoke of the reclamation of waste lands, and a bill for securing the lives and properties of those who reside on the land. Again, in 1847, he declared that neither the character of the soil or the people was the cause of Irish misery. Earl Grey said that the clearance system that prevailed in Ireland was a disgrace to a civilised country. But now O'Connell was dead, and the country was in the convulsions of death. A project was conceived by which, without permanently altering the laws, a clearance of landlords and people might be effected, and new men brought into their place. Men and fiends burned and blasphemed

and tore each other in the hell which English government had made of Ireland, and it was now proposed to change the inhabitants instead of extinguishing the flames. "Remove Irishmen," wrote the *Times*, to whose columns of commonplace a murder monomania towards Ireland always gives a sensational piquancy, "to the banks of the Ganges or the Indus, to Delhi, Benares, or Trincomalee, and they would be far more in their element there than in a country to which an inexorable fate has consigned them." Neither the *Times*, nor a committee of the House of Lords of the same period, ever contemplated that the Irishman could find a free country. They were so accustomed to regard him as wrapped in inevitable bondage, that in their most reckless enumeration of places of refuge they still restricted him to British territories. He must wander abroad, but he must bear at each remove a lengthening chain. How madly those men raved in words, how fatally they blundered in action, we now know.

SECTION VIII.

On the 24th of February, 1848, the Lord Chancellor introduced a bill in the House of Lords for facilitating the transfer of encumbered estates in Ireland. The purport of the bill was to enable estates to be sold, notwithstanding all laws to the contrary, on the petition of landlord or creditor. A very large portion of landed property in Ireland, he explained, was heavily encumbered, so that the ostensible owner could not be said to have any estate in the land at all. The law, he admitted, might be considered inconsistent with the rights of property, but abstract rights should not be allowed to perpetuate great practical injustice. The bill passed through the Lords, and was read a third time in the Commons on the 24th of July, 1848. On the 21st of October, 1849, the act came into operation. The pretext was to relieve the landlords, but the object was to bring in a new race of English and Scotch landlords. It accomplished neither one nor the other. There was a rush of creditors and a total sacrifice of property. Estates that could have paid twice the encumbrances on them did not realise enough to pay the actual burthen, and the proprietors were ruined. Out of seven thousand four hundred and eighty-nine purchasers up to August, 1857, seven thousand one hundred and eighty were Irish. The new men were generally of the shopkeeping class, and habitually regarded land merely as a commodity for making money. They evicted and rack-rented with the insolence of new ownership. There was one injustice in those sales unnoticed at the time. The improvements of the tenants were sold away without any compensation.

The government of a country cannot possess a monopoly of contempt or ill-usage of a portion of its subjects. The wrong that rulers commit is certain to find loyal imitators. The value of Irish life became generally the government value. The steamboat *Londonderry* left Sligo on the 2nd of December, 1848, for Liverpool, with nearly two hundred passengers on board, a large number of whom were emigrants who intended to re-ship at Liverpool for America. The night became stormy, and the passengers were driven by the mate and crew into the steerage

1. The hatches were then closed, and as some of the poor creatures

endeavoured to escape from the narrow den in which they were immured, a tarpaulin was thrown over the entrance, and fastened down. The scene of frenzied struggle that ensued can scarcely be conceived. One poor wretch forced his way out and gave the alarm. Seventy-two persons were found dead—suffocated, mangled, convulsed.

From a report furnished under the order of Government in 1848, we learn that in a single year in the number of farms of from one to five acres, the decrease was 24,147; from five to fifteen acres, 27,379; from fifteen to thirty acres, 4,274; whilst of farms above thirty acres the increase was 3,670. 70,000 occupiers, with their families, numbering about 300,000, were rooted out of the land. The pressure of the poor rates was fast breaking down the landlords. Upwards of 150 ass hides were delivered in Dublin from the county Mayo for exportation to Liverpool. The carcases had been used for food. During this winter multitudes died of hunger. Herds and harvests floated to England, and Irish paupers were sent back from England to Ireland in almost every steamship. Government learned no lesson, took no warning from what it saw. It could conceive no other remedy than to let the evil it had fostered cure itself: that is, let the people starve, reinstate landlordism, and let the same cycle of events revolve once more.

SECTION IX.

It is not good for a nation to dwell upon its sorrows or its sufferings. To men or communities self-pity is a demoralising vice. It makes Christianity a sordid whine; it makes patriotism a beggar's street song. Wrong in every case should lead us to ask why we suffer it—what infirmity of our own exposes us to it? and while a cause is discoverable in our own habits, we should feel anger, not pity, for ourselves—for ourselves, and not for others. It is for Englishmen to dwell on Irish wrongs, and compel their rulers to learn the first elements of humanity. It is for Irishmen to see their errors and amend them. Had the National party remained united, Ireland would have passed through the famine unweakened. Poets, orators, and journalists, the most unfit men for insurrection that society could find in its varied classes, broke away from a triumphant pacific movement, and gave a pretext to the enemy. Their abilities were just those that were required for the emergency, and under O'Connell, in Parliament or in Dublin, would have made the hearts of their tyrants tremble and relent. But they preferred war. It was more suitable for a declamation or a ballad, and therefore more practical and more likely to succeed. The men were carried away by vanity and affectation. Gay uniforms that sword or bullet was never to defile; dying speeches by men who were not about to die; prison cells romantically furnished; wanderings through mountains, perilous escapes, sentimental rencontres—these were the things that bewildered the imagination and consoled defeat. But the country perished while the men who might have saved her were masquerading. Moral force, behind which lay the might that slumbers in the peasant's arm, was what they seceded from; and when they knew not the spell that awakes from that slumber, they fell back on the moral force of the law courts at last.

Men will be yet fascinated by war, as they are by Juggernaut; but these men confounded the pomp and parade of war with the perils and privations of a rebellion. Here is Meagher's description of M'Manus: "A green cap with a broad gold band was jauntily tossed upon his head, and a black-glazed leather belt, supporting a cartridge-box, was buckled round his waist." Doheny tells us how Stephens, when he wanted to make an impression on the daughters of the farmhouses where they sought refuge, "produced the military cap which he always wore inside his shirt." War and rebellion are different things. Judged by a high standard, rebellion, rightly begun and rightly conducted, is better than war. But the soldier's life is one of reckless enjoyment of gaiety, glory, and applause, while the rebel must fight under the shadow of the gallows. After Meagher failed as a rebel he made a good soldier in America.

On the 6th of February, 1849, a bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act was passed. An additional poor-law, known as the rate-in-aid, was then proposed and eventually became law. It enacted that poor-law unions which were solvent should be rated for the relief of those which were not. When the complaint is made that Irish absentee rents are spent in England, the reply is that the two countries are one. Why, then, are not the two countries one poor-law union? One provision of this act, moved by Mr. Monsell, imposed a rate of two shillings and sixpence in the pound to promote emigration.

SECTION X.

Ireland is a preserve in which English institutions run wild. Landlordism, which in England is compelled to submit to rules, in Ireland is an unbridled savage. Protestantism, which in England is domesticated, in Ireland is an incarnate demon. When landlordism was desolating the land, it would be strange if its brother monster rested in its lair. The Orangemen of the county Down assembled on the 12th of July, at the seat of the Earl of Roden, one of the highest dignitaries of their order, to celebrate the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. The motive power of Orangeism is that fiendish instinct which has its chief delight in causing misery. Its privileges, its memories, its powerful associations would be tasteless to it unless salted by the infliction of insult on the less fortunate. One of the parties had marched through an exclusively Catholic district, and had outraged the feelings of the peaceable people with the flaunting of their orange banners and lilies, and by playing before the poor cabins the tune of "Croppies, lie down." The united body, mustering fifteen hundred strong, reached Tollymore Park, the earl's seat, presented their congratulations to the earl on his birthday, and were addressed by him. They received refreshments, and had a regular field-day, firing their guns, and going through drill and parade manœuvres. Warmed with ale and full of boasting, they determined to return by Dolly's Brae. An Orange magistrate named Beers accompanied them. Violent proceedings were expected to occur on the passage, and might have been prevented by Lord Roden and other magistrates present at the banquet, if they had used their influence to

prevent them from returning by that particular road. But the banquet would not avail them, nor could they sleep at night unless they murdered or wantonly insulted a Papist. So the lodges started for Dolly's Brae. So strong was the reason to apprehend disturbance that a large force of police was sent in advance. The inhabitants of the district were found gathered near the roadside, almost quite unarmed. A collision took place. The police joined the Orangemen against the Catholics, and four of the latter were killed. The Orangemen wantonly shot a boy of ten years of age, murdered an old woman, beat in the skull of an idiot with the butts of their muskets, and dragged an inoffensive man into his garden, and stabbed him to death with their bayonets in sight of his family. In the frenzy of their success they sacked and set fire to a number of houses, which were destroyed. An inquiry took place. The county magistrates endeavoured to stifle investigation, but the Government persisted, and the result was the dismissal of Lord Roden from the lieutenancy and several magistrates from the commission.¹ Ireland is continually rebuked for her divisions, and the main argument against her being allowed any measure of self-government is that her factions would destroy each other. Who caused these factions? Are they not fomented from England for the express purpose of furnishing this objection? Human history shows nothing that approaches such devilry as this. But Irishmen should not brood over the wrong, but take counsel how it is to be remedied. If they desire to inflict a keener pang than their foes can occasion them they will be blind and deaf to Orange displays. If they would heap coals of fire on their heads, they will appoint a fast, and in solemn services at their places of worship will supplicate Heaven to have mercy on the merciless, and to be pitiful to the cruel. Why not make it a contest of inward, not external Christianity? Why not show that a Catholic can be a truer Christian than a Protestant?

SECTION XI.

"The greatly subdued tone," says the Annual Register, "which at this time prevailed throughout Ireland, as respects both political and domestic affairs, enabled Her Majesty to visit that kingdom." Deafening shouts hailed the Queen's first landing on Irish ground at Cove, thenceforward called Queenstown, in August, 1849.

A single instance of determined opposition to the landlords and the police, taken from many, will suffice to show the spirit that maintained itself during the famine, and survived it. Constable Hall, of the Killoughby Point Station, King's County, received information that a tenant farmer named Keyes was about to remove his crops in order to avoid distraint for non-payment of rent. He sent for assistance, and obtained an addition of five men. The police barrack was situated on the road by which Keyes and his party must pass. This part of the journey, however, seems to have been performed without interruption. The police then took a short cut across the country, and suddenly threw themselves in front of the approaching array of carts, laden with grain and cattle, surrounded by armed peasants. Hall summoned the body to halt. On

¹ Ann. Reg., 1849.

this, Keyes stepped forward and said, "Constable Hall, don't you know me? Why am I to be stopped? I am but removing my crops and cattle, which are not under seizure." The constable, in reply, said that the transaction seemed very suspicious, and that he was determined to take down the names, at least, of the persons implicated in it before he would let them pass. "Well, then," said Keyes, "we will cut our way through. Armed men," continued he, addressing his own men, "to the front." "Load!" said Hall to the police. "Ready! present arms!" "Fire!" interrupted Keyes, and a volley followed which killed one policeman, mortally wounded two others, seriously injured another, and shot off three of Hall's fingers. Such of the police as were able returned the fire, it is supposed with deadly effect. They then made their escape, and sent intelligence to the neighbouring station. But Keyes had succeeded in his purpose. One load of corn had been thrown on the road to allow the car to be used in carrying off the wounded, but with that exception the cattle and corn had been carried safely off. Had such resistance been universal and simultaneous, the police and soldiers would have been defeated in innumerable fragments. And such was the opportunity, and such the material, that Smith O'Brien would not, or could not, use.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TENANT LEAGUE.

SECTION I.

HAD the seasons continued favourable and the crops healthy, the tenantry of the north of Ireland, through their tenant right, would have grown richer every year; and the tenantry of the south, through the want of tenant right, would have grown poorer every year. The increased produce in the north would go to the tenant's account; in the south it would only encourage the landlord to heavier exactions. But the potato disease proved that tenant right was only an uncertain and insufficient protection. The tenant who enjoyed its benefits while his crops were good was as prosperous as his landlord. In some respects he was better off, because the landlord's rent was fixed, while the tenant's right rose with the rising tide. But when the crops were bad his right suffered, while the landlord's rent remained as before. It was plain that a succession of bad crops must gradually take away every vestige of his right, and at last encroach on his means of paying the landlord's rent, and thus leave him as much at the landlord's mercy as the southern Catholic was. This was what occurred, and it brought the precariousness of his position before him in a way that he had not previously seen. The northern landlords began to use the new power that circumstances gave them, and the tenants at once felt that their cherished privilege was in deadly peril. The Presbyterian ministers began a political agitation on behalf of their congregations. Lord Castlereagh made a mournful complaint of this conduct in the House of Lords. "It was painful," he said, "to find that the Presbyterian clergy had taken the lead in this agitation." He told the House that at a meeting held in the county Down, on the 28th of January, 1850, there were present sixteen clergymen belonging to the Synod of Ulster, and only one Roman Catholic clergyman. One of those clergymen said that the whole difference between the value of the land in its present state of cultivation and in its primeval state 250 years ago was, beyond all contradiction, the unalienable property of the tenant farmers of Ulster. This same clergyman said that an estate belonging to a relative of Lord Castlereagh's was purchased by the present owner at the end of last century for £30,000, having then a rent-roll of between £3,000 and £4,000. The rents now amounted to £24,000; and when the reverend gentleman asked who had caused this increase the meeting responded by cries of the "tenants." Lord Castlereagh told all this to the House of Lords as something very strange. The newspapers began to speak plainly, meetings were held, and tenant protection societies formed throughout the country, the movement in the south having been

inaugurated by Fathers Matthew Keefe and Thomas O'Shea. On the 27th of April it was announced in the press that a deputation had gone from Ulster to London to see Mr. Sharman Crawford, the member for Rochdale, a large landowner in the north of Ireland, and for many years the champion of the tenant farmers in the House of Commons, and that as the result of that interview a combination was likely to be made for securing tenants' rights, between the people of the four provinces of Ireland. A circular was issued on the 8th May announcing a conference in Dublin, and signed by Dr. Gray, of the *Freeman's Journal*; Mr. Duffy, of the *Nation*; Mr. Greer, a Presbyterian, of Derry; Mr. Frederick Lucas, who had in the beginning of the year brought the *Tablet* newspaper from London to Dublin, and some others.

SECTION II.

Frederick Lucas was brought up in the principles of the Society of Friends, and had only lately been received into the Roman Catholic Church. He was a Saxon of the purest, simplest, stateliest mental build. It might be said of him that his eye was single, and that his whole body was full of light. That vague philanthropic spirit which in the community he had left loses itself in vacuity was condensed and directed to practical issues in his new creed and his new country, for Ireland became the country of his adoption. The music of his soul, which otherwise would have ascended unheard of earth to the skies, rolled back in tones of solemn thrill from the cathedral roof of the Catholic Church. The charity which too often wastes itself in abstractions or eccentricities was absorbed by the thirsting and responsive soil of his new country. Love for the oppressed, indignation at the oppressor, became the leading habits of his life. Irish farmers spoke of him with a kind of tearful awe. His childlike simplicity and his godlike zeal seemed to them something unearthly in their combination. Ireland may forget many tyrants and enemies for the sake of the one priceless gift of Frederick Lucas.

On the 6th of August a conference of two hundred delegates from all parts of Ireland and of all religions met in Dublin, and continued their sittings for four days. Lucas took a leading part in those deliberations, and his influence as a journalist secured an attention in the *Times* and other English newspapers to the new agitation that otherwise would have been unattainable. The resolutions were submitted to a large public meeting and enthusiastically adopted. The principles they embodied were a fair valuation rent, fixity of tenure, and the tenant's right to sell his interest. Another resolution, on which great stress was laid, was to the effect that all their efforts would be ineffectual unless they had Parliamentary representatives of known honesty, who would withhold support from any ministry that would not advance their principles. Mr. W. Keogh, M.P. for Athlone, shared in those proceedings. On the 10th of August the Tenant League was established, and a council of a hundred and twenty gentlemen appointed. The hope of O'Connell's life had been to win over the Irish gentry to the demand for repeal of the Union. The result of that repeal, or of the confinement of

the sympathies of the Irish landlords to their own country, which was the moral equivalent of repeal, would be a natural and spontaneous arrangement of tenants' rents and landlords' duties. The gentry stood aloof and opposed, and now an Englishman, with a power and earnestness only second to O'Connell's, was rousing the tenants to stand as a rival class on their native fields, and to claim as a legal right what would not be granted to them as clients and dependents. The *Times* asserted that English and Irish landlords must be put on the same footing, and that there was no reason for legislative interference in one case which did not equally apply to the other. To this Lucas replied: "In both islands the legal and technical arrangements between landlord and tenant are the same. In both, rent is fixed, or appears to be fixed, on a basis of free competition. In both, landlord and tenant have the same degree of nominal freedom to make such contracts as they please. In both, the landlord has the power of dealing with his land as the merchant deals with his goods; and yet, in the two cases, the opposite nature of the result is visible to every eye. In one case the power given by the law is used; in the other it is abused. In the former it is employed as an instrument of protection; in the latter it is employed as an instrument of destruction. In the former it is the staff with which the wayfarer upholds his steps; in the latter it is the bludgeon with which he is smitten to the ground. . . . In England no sane landlord deals with his land as the merchant deals with his goods; it is not the practice in England to insist upon the highest rent that can be got for the land. As a class, the English landlords look on both sides of a bargain, consult for the interest of the tenant, expend their own capital on the farm, carefully make it their own interest that the tenant shall thrive and prosper, and would hold it at once disreputable and foolish to put up their lands to private auction, and to lease them to the highest bidder. . . . The necessity for interference in Ireland arises mainly from the long-continued, permanent, and hopeless refusal of the Irish landlords to follow the example of their English brethren."

SECTION III.

Speaking at a meeting at Enniscorthy, he defended the restlessness of the Irish farmers. "Everyone who has read the history of the world knows that the most conservative part of every population—the one most difficult to be stirred to acts of violence—is always the agricultural population, on account of the fixed and permanent interest which they always have in the soil. Why is Ireland an exception to this rule, which is universal throughout the rest of the world? Why is it that people are able to bring against the agricultural population of Ireland (with some shadow of reason) the charge of being addicted to change? Simply because the present state of things is one from which any and every change would be an advantage, because the present system drives the agricultural population from the conservative instinct which in every other country belongs to and is inherent in it, if it be in a natural and just position. What has happened in other countries? There was a time when the agricultural population in France was in a revolutionary state; when the serfs of that country went forth from their miserable

huts to burn the châteaux and houses of the gentry, by whom they were ground down and oppressed. What was one of the fruits of the French Revolution, which broke up the land system in France? One result was that every peasant was settled on a small tract of land of his own. He acquired property; he became the owner of land; he was fixed on the soil; he had an interest in the maintenance of order and in the cultivation of a conservative spirit; and what has been the result?" He then read quotations proving that the peasant proprietors of France, Germany, Holland, and Switzerland were all on the side of order, and opposed to revolutionary excesses, and that it was only in Austria, Bohemia, and Poland, where the peasants are serfs, that they showed any disposition to rebel. "Plant the Irish peasantry on the land," he concluded, "give them an interest in the soil, give them something to lose in the event of a change, and their natural shrewdness will not dispose them to be more addicted to revolutionary or violent tendencies than the peasant proprietors of those countries." On the 10th of October, at a large meeting at Navan, Lucas repelled the charge of communism. "It required a very philosophical mind to explain communism. He had heard a great many definitions of it, all of them but one very unsatisfactory. The only one that ever satisfied his mind was given by a quaint writer naively, that 'it was a tin kettle very convenient to be tied to the tail of any unfortunate animal whom it was desirable to hunt to death.' But, to be exact, the politicians who make this charge do not go so far as to say we are Communists; only that our principles lead to communism. Lead to communism! Let every man speak for himself. They don't lead *me* to communism. Judging by Mr. Crawford's speech, they don't lead *him* to communism. To the best of my knowledge and belief, they don't lead any member or friend of the league to communism. . . . No doubt, by accident, anything may lead anybody anywhere, especially if he be a fool. . . . One is led to ask how valuation leads to communism? and the answer is, that it renders necessary a legal adjustment of wages. I deny that a legal adjustment of wages is communism. It may be wise or foolish, but communism it is not. About five centuries ago, about the year 1350, a pestilence had filled the graves of England, as the graves of Ireland have been filled in the years preceding 1850. The number of the labouring population was so diminished that wages became extraordinarily high, whereupon the legislature of landlords came forward to enact that no labourer should receive more than a certain rate of wages. . . . On the other side, look at what happened only in the last session of Parliament. From time immemorial, the usury laws have interfered with and have limited private contracts between the borrower of money and the lender of it. Of late years these laws have been somewhat relaxed, and in last session an act was passed, which says, 'provided always that nothing herein contained shall extend to the loan of any money upon or security of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or any estate, or interest thereon.' The meaning of it is, that no landlord shall be at liberty to pay for money borrowed on the security of his estate more than five per cent. The meaning of it is to take under the protection of the law the poor, miserable, weak, helpless, dependent, imbecile, and unprotected

landlord in his dealings with the money-lender. . . . When the landlord brings his land into the market to receive money for it from the usurer, the law steps in to protect him from the usurer, and forbids the usurer to receive more than a fixed rate of interest. When the same landlord brings his land into the market to receive money for it from the tenant, what is to prevent the same law stepping in to protect the tenant from the usurer, who in this instance is the landlord himself, and forbidding that land-usurer to receive for his land more than a fixed rate of rent? What, I ask, is to prevent this? The necessity of protecting the tenant is infinitely greater than the necessity for protecting the landlord. The money-lender is not a worse, nor a more hardened usurer, than are too many of the owners of the soil."

SECTION IV.

On the 4th of November he spoke at Mullingar: "With regard to the main principles upon which the league is founded, and which it has devoted itself to carrying into law, I do not believe that any human being, or any class of society, entertains the slightest difference of opinion. What you have to do is not to convince mistaken minds; it is not to enlighten ignorance; it is not to assure people of that which they do not know; but it is to reform a defective and almost incorrigible will. You have to compel men to do that which they know is right, but which they refuse to do. You have to provide a remedy for a selfishness and a folly which have existed for centuries; which for centuries have produced the worst and most destructive results; which to the present moment show no chance of reforming themselves, and which require, therefore, to be promptly reformed by law. This is what the Tenant League has set itself to do. There is no difference of opinion among the whole human race that rack-renting, as it is practised in Ireland, is a crime. No man is so foolish or so wicked as to deny this obvious proposition—that the man who lets his land for the highest rent that can be wrung from hungry tenants, by unlimited competition, is devoid not merely of the ordinary sentiments of humanity, but of those of justice; that he does that which he ought not to do; that he perpetrates a foul iniquity; that he strikes at the root of all society, and that he is a nuisance of which society ought to be purged. . . . What is rack rent? I will tell you what it is. The rack is an instrument of torture which, when applied to a healthy, well-knit, vigorous man, violently stretches him out, inch by inch, till his limbs, joints, and sinews are dislocated, and he is turned into a feeble, miserable, helpless wretch, who can just manage to totter through the streets, and perhaps fall down in the gutter. Now, rack rent is exactly this instrument of torture applied to the pocket of the farmer. Shilling by shilling it violently stretches out a just, fair, and reasonable rent into a rent unjust, unfair, and unreasonable—a rent which the farmer (no free contractor, as we said before) cannot pay out of the produce of the soil; a rent which takes from him the bread which he should eat, the food and clothing of his family—everything upon which he and they should be supported and maintained like Christians, and converts them

into miserable slaves and paupers—empty, naked, tottering, hunger-bitten, degraded, and demoralised. This is rack rent as it is known in Ireland; and as such it is not praised, but condemned and execrated by every sane and honest man. Not merely you and I, but, in words at least, every landlord, every official, every minister of State condemns rack-renting—condemns the exaction from the tenant of a rent forced up to an unnatural amount by unlimited competition.”

SECTION V.

Throughout the whole of 1850 the league continued to spread its doctrines, and with them to establish the principle of independent opposition, by which it was hoped they would eventually become law. It was insisted on that any ministry that refused to settle the claims of the Tenant League must be uncompromisingly opposed. But events now occurred that distracted the attention of the Leaguers. The Pope reorganised the Catholic Church in England. The nominal titles hitherto borne by the archbishops and bishops were changed. Instead of being bishops of imaginary places or in general terms, they were made bishops of English districts, as of Westminster, Liverpool, or Salford. This became known on the 8th of October. A portion of Protestant England resented this proceeding precisely as if the title was the main thing, and possession of the people of the several dioceses a matter of little consideration. On the 4th of November Lord John Russell wrote a letter to the Bishop of Durham, in which he termed the Pope's conduct as “insolent and insidious,” and reflected on the “mummeries of superstition.” Additional provocation was given by a synod held at Thurles, at which the Queen's colleges were once for all condemned according to the Papal decision, and a resolution come to that a Catholic university should be founded. As individuals we sometimes fall into violent passions we scarcely know why, and say things of which we are heartily ashamed when we grow cool. Communities are liable to similar weaknesses. England, excited by the Papal aggression, said and did many things; among others, passed an Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, which made it penal in England or Ireland for Roman Catholic bishops to assume territorial titles, and then forgot all about it as speedily as she could. “I don't believe,” Mr. Greville wrote, “Lord John Russell really cares much. The *Times* blows up the coals for the sake of popularity; but Delane (the editor) told me he thought the whole thing gross humbug and a pack of nonsense.”

A determined and protracted opposition was offered to the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill in Parliament. Its Irish opponents were known as the Papal Brigade, and foremost among them were Keogh and Sadlier. The members of the league began insensibly to divide into a church party and a country party. Keogh and Sadlier were, from their known characters, suspected of using their zeal for religion as a cloak and counterpoise for future defection from the Tenant League in pursuit of their personal interests. Lucas and Duffy, while devoted sons of the church, made the ends of the league the paramount object of their public struggle. A Catholic Defence Association, the chief object of

which was to protest against and demand the repeal of the Titles Bill, was formed at a meeting held in the Rotunda on the 19th of August, 1851, under the presidency of Dr. Cullen, Archbishop of Armagh. Sadlier was one of the secretaries, and Vincent Scully, a nephew of Sadlier's, and Keogh were among the speakers. Keogh ostentatiously defied the Act of Parliament. Holding it in his hand, he declared that he unhesitatingly gave his proper title to the Lord Archbishop of Armagh. The Young Ireland party in the Tenant League had no confidence in the association; and Lucas, though he warmly promoted the scheme in the *Tablet*, was not taken into the counsel of the leaders, nor was he placed on the council. In February, 1852, the Whigs were defeated on a militia bill, and Lord Derby became Prime Minister. Mr. Power, M.P. for Cork, one of the brigade, was offered and accepted the governorship of St. Lucia. Mr. Vincent Scully became a candidate for the vacant seat, and was supported by his uncle and Keogh. It was on this occasion that the latter made a speech, in reply to some doubts thrown on his sincerity, in which he twice called on God as a witness to his asseverations. But though he swore twice, it would be difficult to determine what it was that he swore. He did not say that he would never take office. He did not say that he would do or not do any definite thing. His baseness was that he equivocated and called God to witness it. He was notoriously an unscrupulous and unprincipled man. He was one of those men whose animal spirits are more winning than a thousand virtues in others, and whose strength lies in the evil or the absence of good that is in them. And he was overwhelmed with debt. It is idle to specify any of the acts of such a man, for it is the man himself that is to be objected to; and those with whom he comes in contact he wins by his unfailing good humour, and impresses by his perfect control of his faculties.

SECTION VI.

Parliament was dissolved on the 1st of July. In the election contest that ensued the Church and Tenant Right were rival cries. At a meeting held at Navan, in the previous year, Lucas had been selected as one of the candidates for Meath, and the selection was now ceremoniously confirmed. The Defence Association advertised in the papers advising the Meath men not to elect him. But the people of Ireland were alive to the importance of the occasion, and with no candidate before the country was the claim they had at heart so closely identified as with Lucas. He was elected by 2,004 votes against 565 polled by his opponent, Mr. Grattan. Duffy was returned for New Ross, Isaac Butt for Youghal, Keogh for Athlone. John and James Sadlier and Francis and Vincent Scully were also returned. On the whole the cause that was to save the life of Ireland would be represented by between fifty and sixty members in the coming Parliament, and the hopes of legal protection rose higher than their fears of the landlords, whom they had defied by their votes, in the breasts of the constituencies. At a tenant-right conference held in Dublin on the 8th of September a resolution was proposed by Keogh, and carried unanimously, that the members returned on tenant-right principles should hold themselves independent of, and in

opposition to, all governments which did not make it part of their policy, and a Cabinet question, to give to the tenantry of Ireland a measure embodying the principles of Mr. Sharman Crawford's bill.

On his election, Lucas wrote to a friend in England the following letter: "I cannot tell you the pleasure your most kind and affectionate letter of congratulation has given me. I have reached home from Meath only a few hours, and, after the excitement of the election, I must confess it, that I feel in rather low spirits. . . . This whole business of M.P., with the weight, duties, and difficulties of it, by anticipation almost presses me to the earth. Often and often I wish I could wash my hands of it. Why? Not from any false modesty assuredly. I think if I were an English Protestant, taking my stand in the ranks of either Whig or Tory . . . I could discharge my duties in a very tolerable and creditable manner. . . . But, in fact, I go into the House of Commons to stand (I fear) very nearly alone—a member of an unpopular minority, an unpopular member of that minority, and disliked even by the greater number of the small party with which I am to act, and having cast upon me, in a prominent manner, the defence of the two noblest causes in the world—that of a religion, which it requires great learning to defend properly, and that of the most ill-treated and (in all essential qualities of heart and character) the noblest population that ever existed on the face of the earth. . . . You talk of Burke and O'Connell, and, indeed, to do adequately what I ought to do would require a Burke or an O'Connell—that is, a man who, in an assembly of really able men, can stand *alone* on his own resources and character against every opposition from within and from without. . . . You will laugh, perhaps, at my calling the Irish people *the finest peasantry in the world!* But the limited intercourse I have had with them has left on my mind a very strong impression that there is not in the world a people—I refer to the unsophisticated portion of the country people—for whom a man of any heart or conscience would sooner lay down his life. The wrongs they continue to endure fill me with a passionate indignation, which I hardly know how either to express or repress, and I would give every hope I have in this world to alleviate them a little. I fancy that a man who enters the House of Commons with these feelings is little better than a fool. What right has he to dream of an Irish people, possessing an Irish character, requiring an Irish social and political organisation, unfitted for the narrow pedantry of English systems, and whom an English House of Commons may torture, but cannot govern?—to dream of such a people, and to labour to get for them institutions, which the English intellect must despise exactly in proportion as they are really suited to the people for whom they are intended? I fancy that to attempt wisdom for Ireland in an English House of Commons is, not exactly a contradiction in terms, but a practical contradiction just about as gross. Anyhow, I have it in my mind that I shall fail in my endeavour, that my abilities are not equal to the task before me, that I shall be rudely thrust out of the saddle upon the ground, and that before two years' time I may be digging gold in or near Port Philip. In the meantime, my dear old friend, I shall try to do my part like a man, and, whether I fail or succeed, I shall, at all events, love both my old friends and my new
ends. . . ."

SECTION VII.

The House of Commons met on the 11th of November. It was clear from the start that the Ministry was at the mercy of the Irish party. The result proved how a verbal pledge may be made the means of violating its spirit. The Speech from the Throne referred to the "unhappy spirit of insubordination and turbulence" in Ireland. The Ministry were asked what this imported. They attempted to evade the question, but when it was more pointedly put in view of a coming critical division, they emphatically disclaimed all idea of penal legislation. On the 22nd Mr. Napier introduced four Government bills on the land question. On the 17th December the division on the Budget took place. Keogh, Sadlier, and others insisted that they were pledged to vote against any government that did not make Sharman Crawford's bill a Cabinet measure. Napier's bill, they said, was not Sharman Crawford's. Lucas advised to give the Government a fair trial, but he was overruled, and the Ministry were defeated by 305 to 286, 52 of the Irish party voting with the majority. Lord Aberdeen took office with a Coalition Ministry, and news reached the Irish people, waiting in breathless expectation, that Keogh was appointed Solicitor-General, and Sadlier a Junior Lord of the Treasury. Mr. Monsell, who had become a Catholic, Serjeant Murphy, and Anthony O'Flaherty also took office. If the nation and its leaders were undivided, the remedy lay in their hands. But when the two chief defaulters sought re-election, they were supported by Archbishop Cullen, now Archbishop of Dublin, and the bishops of their respective districts. Sadlier was defeated at Carlow by a majority of four on the 19th of January, 1853, but was elected for Sligo in July, and Keogh was returned unopposed at Athlone in April. The characters and fortunes of these two men were very different. Sadlier was a silent plotter under an exterior of studied respectability; Keogh was audacious and shameless. Sadlier was ruined by for once adopting the tactics of his companion. At the Carlow election a voter was arrested at Sadlier's suit when he was about to vote against him. The man brought an action for false imprisonment. His evidence was perfectly clear, but Sadlier swore point blank against it. The jury found for the plaintiff, and Sadlier, in January, 1854, resigned his post as Junior Lord of the Treasury. On the 16th of February, 1856, he committed suicide by poisoning himself on Hampstead Heath. The Tipperary Joint-stock Bank, one of his numerous speculations, immediately collapsed, and it was found that he had forged and swindled to the amount of half a million. Keogh struggled successfully through every difficulty, monetary and moral, with unblushing effrontery. His property qualification as a member of Parliament was questioned, and, though everyone knew he was not qualified, he proved his case. He was charged in both Houses with having distinctly recommended assassination. In an election speech he had used these words: "Boys, the days are now long and the nights are short. In autumn the days will be getting shorter and the nights longer. In winter the nights will be very long, and then let everyone remember who voted for Sir R. Levinge." Lord Eglinton, who had been Viceroy at the time, said that during the whole time that he was

in Ireland no words were brought to him which, in his opinion, so distinctly recommended assassination. But Keogh denied the words, and got someone to say he did not hear them, and baffled his enemies. There are two species of unassailable reputation. The possessor of one is strong in his integrity. When the man who has the other is accused of any offence, people say carelessly that it is "his way." Keogh had achieved the latter. In 1855, when Lord Aberdeen left office, the Attorney-General, Mr. Brewster, and the Solicitor-General, Keogh, consulted together and agreed to resign. Brewster resigned, and Keogh was made Attorney-General. When he went to Athlone for re-election he was proposed by the Bishop of Elphin, and returned without opposition. He was afterwards raised to the bench.

SECTION VIII.

The division in the Irish party became more pronounced and more definite. The northern Presbyterians, and some of the priests, following their bishops, took the side of the place-holders. The Archbishop of Tuam stood with the country party. As a rule, Churchmen rising to high position become imperialist and conservative. The latent ambition that guides their ascent expands when they reach the summit. They wear the garb of humility, but inwardly they raven for power. Dr. Cullen would have sacrificed Ireland to the prosperity of the Papedom. The Repealers and Tenant-righters ranked in his estimation with Italian liberals. The mind of the country had acquired by long experience an almost infallible instinct in deciding where the Pope's power ceases in his interference in Irish affairs. But the country had no longer one mind. No such distraction in the Catholic Church could have taken place in O'Connell's time. We see the vastness of his work in the magnitude of the fragments of wreck that the sea of time casts ashore. Lucas took up the country's cause with heroic fervour, and won Dr. Cullen's antipathy. A testimonial was projected in his support, and the archbishop attempted, in vain, to thwart it. A Tenant League conference was held on the 26th of September, 1854, and a series of meetings throughout the country was organised. The first was to be held at Callan, on the 25th of October, but Father Keefe was ordered by the bishop to abstain from taking any part in it. Father O'Shea was present, and spoke; he was soon also silenced. Lucas saw that a concerted plan was in contemplation to obtain the Papal consent to a new set of rules, which he felt would be ruinous to the dearest rights and interests of Ireland. The priests favourable to tenant right drew up a memorial or appeal to the Pope, and Lucas was chosen to present it. Two priests were selected to accompany him, but their superiors assigned them other duties. Lucas made his last speech in Ireland at a great tenant-right meeting at Thurles, on the 25th of November. When he reached Rome, he was kindly received by the Pope, but through Cullen's influence, which was powerful at the Propaganda, he was kept waiting till his heart was almost broken. He arrived in London from Rome on the 23rd of May, 1855, in very bad health, and died on the 22nd of October. On the 6th of November Duffy sailed for Australia.

The first question on which the Young Irelanders separated from the Repeal Association was that of physical force. The second was the charge of holding office by Repealers under Government. Events only could explain and define this accusation. Systematic betrayal distinguishes itself from legitimate participation in government.

SECTION IX.

Another star was quenched in the firmament of Ireland's hope. Another battle had been bravely fought, and the leaders had gone over to the enemy in the crisis of victory. Pain, it is said, when it reaches a certain degree is extinguished in insensibility. A nation may be stunned by the shock of a great disappointment. As a man thwarted in a great enterprise which had lifted his soul to majestic visions turns mechanically to the abandoned routine and the small cares of every-day life, so did the country go back to the slavish tasks and unfruitful labour from which she had seen a bright opening of escape. Never had a people endured so many deadly blows in so short a time—O'Connell's death, the famine, O'Brien's failure, Keogh's treason, all embittered by discord. Every weapon had been broken in Ireland's grasp, and her arm and her spirit were paralysed. And let those who would exult in her discomfiture ask themselves what had she been striving for? Was it some wild utopian scheme? Was she madly rushing from her subordinate sphere in search of impossible glory, or luxury, or ease? The people of Ireland had been endeavouring only to keep roofs over their children's heads and to drive starvation from their hearths, to save the honour of their daughters and the manhood of their sons, and to lead lives of honest remunerative labour on the soil where God had placed them. And now, when they stood overwhelmed and powerless by their betrayal, a cry of derision arose from those who fostered the traitors. Statesmen and political economists uttered their theories and avowed their conclusions, just as an undertaker might calculate his preparations in the ears of a dying man. Tenant right, Lord Palmerston said, was landlord wrong. If the tenant, said Mr. Lowe, chooses to improve the land, unless he takes the precaution to obtain the consent of the landlord, whether he increases the value of the property or not, he has no business to meddle with it. The landlords were better judges in the matter of granting leases than the House could possibly be. If a piece of land is your property, the Irish school books taught, you ought to be able to dispose of it like any other property; either to sell it, or to cultivate it yourself, or to employ a bailiff and labourers to cultivate it for you, or to let it to a farmer. And what was the end proposed? No friend of Ireland, wrote Mr. Senior, can wish the war to be prolonged, still less that it should end by the victory of the tenants, for that would plunge Ireland into barbarism worse than that of the last century. The sooner Ireland becomes a grazing country, with the comparatively thin population which a grazing country requires, the better for all classes. Mr. Senior forgot the major premise, that the fewer inhabitants of earth the less suffering there would be. Lord Carlisle said that he would not be debarred by the sight of golden harvests from urging his hearers to bear

in mind that Nature specially fitted Ireland to be the mother of flocks and herds. So spoke and wrote the friends of privilege when they supposed that the heart and hope of Ireland were stilled for ever. But they little knew the nature of Irishmen, or the nature of man, if they supposed that the love was cold because the faith was vanquished and the hope was dead. We may be proud of our country, and scorn her enemies while she prospers, but we love her only in disaster and ruin. No Englishman can fully comprehend an Irishman's love for his country. And may he never be able to comprehend it. For to comprehend it he should see his own country beaten, trampled, and reviled. Now he has only faith and hope; then he would be possessed by the love that hopeth all things and believeth all things. Now he loves with a father's love, the love of reflected self-interest; then he would love with a mother's love, the love of weakness and suffering. Now he marches haughtily by her car of triumph; then he would take her to his bosom and know a pang of affection that the victor never feels. The problem of Norman England for centuries has been to wean Irishmen from their motherland by making her vile in their eyes, and the result has been to create a love that survives transplantation and defies time.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FENIANISM.

SECTION I.

JAMES STEPHENS was one of those who escaped from Ballingarry in 1848. On the 5th of August he joined Doheny, and for six weeks they wandered through the country, occasionally finding food and shelter from sympathising friends. They were sent away unrelieved, and with reproaches, from the door of a priest who had urged on the party to extremities. But they were elsewhere received with kindness, and were always supplied with money by their friends at a distance, with whom they kept up constant communication. They prolonged their wanderings designedly, in order that they might see for the first and last time the beautiful scenery of the West of Ireland. The solaces that await on defeat, whether in a royal or a rebel cause, the pursuit of the foe as well as the welcome of the friend, the quickening proximity of peril and pleasure, of hardship and hospitality, all enlivened by the romance of the situation and the gratified vanity of increased self-importance, have left their traces in the narrative of their adventures, which Doheny afterwards wrote. When we see the youth of every civilised country leaving their homes, frequently homes of luxury and ease, to encounter dangers and undergo privations, merely in order to diversify the weariness of life, we may rest certain that the young men of Ireland will never rust in idleness while the richest meadow land of romantic enterprise lies before their very doors. The fugitives, when they reached Killarney, learned that Lord John Russell was visiting in the district. They immediately conceived the project of making him a prisoner, and holding him as a hostage. A similar project was conceived when the Queen was in Dublin, and was seriously proposed to Duffy. Lord John, however, unconsciously foiled the enterprise by his quick departure, and had no opportunity of learning that the rebels had set so high a value on his person. At last Stephens escaped to France, and Doheny to the United States. O'Mahony, after wandering about his native mountains for some weeks with a band of followers, also left the country.

The immediate object of the English Government was to get rid of the Young Ireland chiefs. They were farther than ever from final success when they attained that purpose. They resembled gardeners who, by nipping off the flowers of plants, drive the colouring matter into the foliage. O'Connell concentrated, embodied, formulated, and dispensed for a time the political genius of the nation. Even before his death his empire was grasped at by a group of men who had been his lieutenants. When they were scattered, it descended as a conscious possession into the hands of a community of aspirants. The few men who were expatriated were of no consideration, in regard to clear conception of what they

would be at and stern determination to carry it out, when compared with those who were left behind. There were scores of men more eagerly ambitious, less trammelled with social hesitations, readier with speech and pen, and in closer contact with the people on whom they were to operate, than O'Brien, or Meagher, or Duffy, or Mitchel. They fittted in various directions, and kept the peasants in a state of expectancy. The agitation became secret as it sank. What O'Connell spoke from the house-tops was now whispered in the ear. Some of the plotters visited the Continent to learn how conspiracies were conducted there. One of them, named Gray, on his return laid the basis of the secret association which afterwards grew to such portentous dimensions. It is said that Stephens and O'Mahony visited Ireland and were involved in an abortive rising in 1849. They had entered into secret societies in France, the latter from mere sympathy, Stephens with the view of bringing all the influence he could acquire to bear on an Irish revolution. It is reported that he made the acquaintance of friends of Louis Napoleon, and entered into engagements with Russian agents at the time when the Crimean war began to cloud the horizon. Both men sailed to London, had interviews with international conspirators, crossed to Ireland, and got appointed, Stephens as chief organiser of a secret movement in Ireland, and O'Mahony as its introducer, promoter, and head centre in America.

SECTION II.

The Ribbon Society had already been for a long time in existence. In Ireland it was strictly Catholic, in America not so. Stephens was a Protestant by birth and an Orangeman by family. He easily fell into the anti-clerical spirit of the internationalists, and contemplated casting off the yoke of Rome as well as that of England. This cut him away from communion with Ribbon-men and ensured the steady opposition of the priests. O'Mahony was a fanatical Catholic, had the goodwill of the Church, and found no difficulty in gaining over the members of the Ribbon lodges. When the undertaking began, the conspirators were well supplied with funds. To carry it on, members were required to pay in Ireland half a crown, in America half a dollar, a month. In a few years a steady stream of wealth flowed in. At a later period the receipts of the Fenian treasury in America were 150,000 dollars monthly. Stephens boasted that in Ireland they were greater. This money was to be applied to extending and establishing the brotherhood, drilling the members, purchasing arms and military stores, and corrupting the army. Those objects it accomplished in different degrees, but its principal and most pregnant effect was that it corrupted Stephens and his immediate followers, and encouraged them in habits of luxurious and licentious living. On the other hand, almost every Irishman who was not a sharer in or a gainer by his country's degradation joined the ranks of the conspirators. And many who might, if they chose, belong to those classes, stung to greater agony by the sight of tyranny than they could possibly endure as its immediate victims, were constrained to fling themselves into any enterprise that promised their country's deliverance. Among the Young Irelanders there were none of purer lives or more

vigorous understandings than could be found among the followers or dupes of Stephens. In unflinching singleness of aim and reckless personal devotion the latter were superior. The Young Irelanders displayed their abilities and their rivalries in sunlight; the others sacrificed themselves in darkness.

SECTION III.

The conspirators founded a literary club, called the Phoenix Society, at Skibbereen, the proceedings of which soon became noticeable. It seems to have been an independent institution accidentally composed in whole or part of members of the secret association. It gave an outlet for the expression of sentiments, and encouraged a display of practices such as drilling, which otherwise would have been carefully concealed. The priesthood and the Government, warned by the parish priest of Kenmare, were both watching its proceedings. Early in 1858 Stephens endeavoured to induce Mr. A. M. Sullivan, editor of the *Nation*, to join his society, and on his refusal threatened him with the consequences if he made any public use of the application. Mr. Sullivan was afterwards waited on by the Bishop of Kerry, who suggested to him that a friendly warning in the *Nation* would bring the members of the Phoenix Club to their senses, and avert the danger of Government interference. He consulted with his friends, whom he did not find unanimous in their approval of the course recommended by the bishop. Meantime, the Catholic clergy denounced the conspiracy from their altars, and then Mr. Sullivan addressed a strong appeal to patriotic Irishmen to avoid secret societies. The step which he took was honourable and patriotic in the best sense, but he never overcame the prejudice which it excited against him. A more unscrupulous—some would say a wiser—politician would have cautiously kept aloof, and at the same time accepted any aid which might ordinarily accrue from an undertaking kindred with his own, though illegal. It may be that it is allowable to reject no co-operation that assists a common cause—that political life on earth is sustained as well by the central fires as by that which burns from the firmament. Most great causes are based on strata of society that hold extreme views, and regard the laws with no respect; but their leading advocates do not disown their support, or denounce their errors. Secret mischief is prevented by draining off the energies of the mass of the people, and fixing their attention on open and legitimate agitation. There were no subterranean tremors while the volcano of O'Connell's genius blazed. It might have been better policy to absorb rather than risk alienating the conspiring peasantry; but Mr. Sullivan's conduct was most probably determined by other motives than those of policy. He was a conscientious Catholic, and as such was bound to condemn secret societies, especially one which was directly opposed to the power of his Church. This incident, and its consequences, were such as future leaders could not fail to consider.

The Government were not to be balked of their share in the suppression of a rebellious movement. Numbers of young men were made prisoners, and a special commission was issued for their trial. In March, 1859, the proceedings commenced at Tralee. The first prisoner arraigned

was a national school teacher named O'Sullivan. There was evidence of drilling, and much allusion to some mysterious person who hovered on the obscure outskirts of the scene, but the design of the principal informer was to hide the seriousness of the occasion in contempt and ridicule. The jury disagreed. On the second trial the jury was exclusively Protestant, and found a verdict of guilty. O'Sullivan was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. The remaining prisoners were induced to plead guilty by the promise of pardon, and the commutation of O'Sullivan's sentence, and the promise was fulfilled. Among those who took this course was Jeremiah Donovan, afterwards known as O'Donovan Rossa. Whether those Phoenix trials were not intentionally hastened and shaped by the conspirators, to baffle exposure and turn attention from their deeper plots, is a matter of uncertainty.

SECTION IV.

The success of the conspiracy was greater at first in Ireland than in America, and there was a general desire that Stephens, who was credited with it, should lend his assistance beyond the Atlantic. He sailed for the United States in the autumn of 1858, and was received with enthusiasm. The conspiracy was now new modelled, and provided by O'Mahony with a new name, "The Fenian Brotherhood," taken from the name of an ancient Irish military order. Mitchel and Meagher, who had escaped from their places of transportation, were then in America. Stephens applied to them, or, as Mitchel described it, "required them to place themselves at the head of the organisation in the United States, appeal to their countrymen for money, and send it to him." After five months he returned, leaving O'Mahony still head centre. The imperious confidence and official assumption of Stephens, under apparent circumstances, are remarkable.

In November, 1860, O'Mahony went to Ireland. One of his objects was to find means to confute the attacks which the priests in America were making on the brotherhood. This end was finally attained by making the movement an open one there. An understanding was also come to with Stephens as to the exact amount of foreign aid that could justify an insurrection. Some method of getting up a great demonstration, which would show the strength of the Fenians without attracting the attention of the Government, was also discussed. The death of M'Manus, in San Francisco, supplied what was needed. It was determined that the body should be brought to Ireland for burial, and that there should be a public funeral. This plan was carried out, and proved successful beyond their expectation. The remains reached New York on the 13th of September, 1861, and were placed in the cathedral, where a solemn high mass was sung and an address delivered by the archbishop. On the last day in October the body reached Cork. The Roman Catholic bishop refused to admit it to the cathedral. It was borne through streets densely thronged with sympathisers, among whom were groups of soldiers, mostly non-commissioned officers in full dress. As they crossed one of the bridges some dozens of these joined in the procession. In Dublin the cathedral was closed, as in Cork, and numbers

of soldiers took part in the proceedings. The purpose was seriously entertained of making this demonstration the signal for insurrection. Stephens vehemently opposed this idea, and at one spot on the confines of Tipperary, when the excited crowd, incensed, as the funeral car approached, by the sight of a detachment of soldiers, were about to rush to the attack of a neighbouring barracks, he shouted to them to kneel in prayer, and they yielded to the stronger habit of their lives.

Great numbers of the Fenians entered the American army to learn drill. When the war broke out it gave a great impetus to the movement. The belief got abroad that when the South was conquered the North would help Ireland, and multitudes of Irishmen joined the Federal ranks. At the close of the war there were 15,000 men in the Northern army, and as many more had died on the field or in hospital.

SECTION V.

As the conspiracy grew, the rivalry between O'Mahony and Stephens increased. In every point of view, except that of mere conspirators, O'Mahony was by far the superior of the two, and he, therefore, had the confidence of the Irish Nationalists as a party, and the sympathy of the better-class well-wishers of the conspiracy from without, as well as of the more educated members. Stephens was disliked for his despotic manners and his private character. Both in Ireland and America men were getting weary of mere organising and money collecting, and grew impatient for action. A congress was demanded, and met at Chicago, in October, 1863. The association was declared to be no longer secret, and the republic of Ireland was proclaimed. Though no supremacy of either rival was established, it was evident that Stephens meant to take the management of the conspiracy into his own hands. The society now increased rapidly and the time became critical. The Government set men to watch the office of the *Irish People*, a newspaper which had just been started; and a policeman named Talbot was directed to trace the movements of the person whose office it was to seduce the soldiery. When it was that Stephens came to an understanding with the Castle authorities cannot be yet ascertained, but from this time forward it became his settled purpose to destroy the organisation. In 1864 he went to America, chiefly to raise funds, and before sailing drew up a document, signed with his name, in which, in plain language, quite different from the jargon of conspiracy, he appointed T. C. Luby, John O'Leary, and C. J. Kickham, joint editors of the *Irish People*, as an executive during his absence. While in America he took into his confidence, in spite of repeated warnings, three men, J. J. Corydon, Godfrey Massey, and Pierce Nagle, who were leading informers in after days. He actually told O'Mahony that he meant to have himself arrested by the Irish police, in order to show how easily he could get out of prison, through the aid of prison officials who were Fenians. His object, of course, should have been to conceal this power, if he possessed it. During his absence, the Irish Fenians were indefatigable in preventing and breaking up all Nationalist meetings of a loyal character. In this work, O'Donovan Rossa, who was the registered proprietor of the *Irish People*, was the

ringleader. The man whose business it was to corrupt the soldiers was arrested and sentenced to seven years' transportation. Rossa and others wished to rescue him, but Stephens, who returned in August, would not consent. Pressure was now made from Ireland on the head centre to issue the final call to insurrection. He sent Colonel T. J. Kelly to ascertain and report on the state of military preparations in Ireland, without consulting Stephens; but Kelly fell at once under his influence and reported at his dictation. General Millen, of the Mexican army, was then sent. He was kept in complete ignorance of what was passing, and assigned trifling or absurd duties. Rossa went to America to urge the leaders there to issue the final summons and hasten the fiat. O'Mahony and the central council resolved to send two plenipotentiary agents to examine into the general readiness of affairs in Ireland. Their report was favourable, and the 20th of September, 1865, was fixed for the outbreak. One of the agents, when he landed in Dublin, either designedly or by accident dropped some documents of an official kind, that fell into the hands of the authorities. They contained no information of any importance, but Stephens made use of the incident to account for the subsequent proceedings of the police, although he failed to send word to America of the misadventure in sufficient time to prevent the forwarding of £6,000 for the purchase of arms, which in consequence came into the possession of the Government. He warned his principal officers that they would be soon arrested, but assured them of a speedy release, and they fully trusted him. On the 15th of September the office of the *Irish People* was surrounded by the police. Luby, anticipating this event, had carried off the principal papers to his own house. But his house was at the same time entered by the police, the papers seized, and he himself made prisoner. Among the papers was the document which Stephens had left when he went to America, appointing the three editors an executive. A number of other arrests were made, including O'Leary and Rossa. On the same night, Nagle, who had for some time been in the Government pay, left, early in the evening, a house where he had been in consultation with Stephens and others, to inform the police where Stephens might be found, but he was arrested himself on the way by a detective, and was told, when he insisted that he had important information to give, that his information could wait. Stephens now gathered his remaining lieutenants, including Kickham, at his house, and was made prisoner with them on the 10th of November. It now only remained for him, having decoyed his dupes, with their eyes open, into the trap, to get out of it himself without loss of prestige. When brought before the magistrates for committal, he made a defiant speech, intended for the outer public. Rising, and folding his arms, he said: "I have employed no lawyer in this case, because, in making a defence of any kind, I should be recognising British law in Ireland. Now, I deliberately and conscientiously repudiate the existence of that law in Ireland; its right, or even its existence, in Ireland; and I defy any punishment, and despise any punishment, it can inflict upon me. I have spoken it." Here we have the character of the man, who carried a military cap under his shirt, to put on when he desired to make a favourable impression, at its height.

SECTION VI.

The prisoners were confined in Richmond Prison, and their trial was to take place on the 27th of November, 1865. Guards of soldiers and police had been placed in the prison when the arrests were made. By Thursday, November the 23rd, they were removed. On the morning of the 25th all the doors leading to Stephens' cell were found open, and the cell empty. After all the open doors had been passed, the prisoner would still be within the high prison walls. Two large tables were found, one on the other, close against the wall. But there was no sign of foot-steps on them, and the old loose mortar on the top of the wall was quite undisturbed. Stephens had simply walked out of prison as he had walked in.

The trials began on the 28th of November. Keogh presided, and Butt defended the prisoners. Luby and O'Leary were sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude, Kickham to fifteen, Rossa to penal servitude for life. Stephens left the country on the 11th of March, 1866, in company with T. J. Kelly. He went from his lodgings on an outside car, undisguised, passed by several policemen, and walked on board a vessel in the Liffey. He and his companion reached a port in Scotland, slept in Kilmarnock, went in a mail train next day to London, slept at the Palace Hotel, started by the morning train from the Victoria Station for Dover, and reached Paris in safety. Here he remained for some time, amusing himself, having sent Kelly on to America. He was entertained by the Marquis de Boissy, and is said to have had an interview with the Emperor. He then sailed for America, and arrived in New York on the 10th of May, 1866. A letter from Mitchel to O'Mahony had preceded him, beseeching O'Mahony under no circumstances to allow Stephens to obtain control of the Fenian organisation in America. At this time O'Mahony and a Mr. Roberts were contending for the chief place. O'Mahony had been deposed and restored as head centre. His party engaged in an ineffectual attempt to seize the island of Campo Bello, New Brunswick. Roberts's party then made a partially-successful invasion of Canada, under O'Neill. Stephens made arrangements with General Cluseret, whom he had met in Paris, to take the command of an Irish revolutionary army. Cluseret made it an express condition that he should be put at the head of 10,000 men.¹ When the time for action came, Stephens began to shrink, but his life was threatened, and he was compelled to enter into a positive engagement that the fighting should begin with the year 1867. Early in January, 1867, Cluseret and Kelly sailed and landed in France. Cluseret went on to London, to settle differences which had arisen in the society. He soon sent for Kelly. An attack on Chester Castle was arranged by Stephens, without consulting those who were to engage in it, and information was given by Corydon to the authorities (Feb. 11, 1867). As Cluseret would go to Ireland only on one condition, Massey took his place, and, arriving at the Limerick junction, found the place full of soldiers. He fainted, was taken prisoner, and made a full confession. When the news reached Cluseret, he left England.

¹ "Fraser's Magazine," July, 1872.

SECTION VII.

A council of delegates met in Dublin, and fixed on the 12th of February for a general rising, and word was sent to this effect through the country. A few days before the 12th it was decided to postpone proceedings till the 5th of March. There was not time for the countermand to circulate widely, and the result was that small bodies of men assembled in different places, found themselves unsupported, and scattered more rapidly than they came together. Exaggerated reports spread, and the wildest terror prevailed. The gentry of Kerry flocked into Killarney with all their valuables, took possession of the Railway Hotel, fortified and provisioned it, and prepared for a siege. Some collisions occurred in different places, but there was no serious fighting. The people were wholly unprovided with arms or leaders. Some police barracks were attacked, but the assailants were averse to shedding blood. A few of them were killed. The police were cool and disciplined, and the insurgents never rose to the passion of conflict. When all was over, Kelly continued to reside in Dublin, moving about with an absence of disguise that astonished his confederates. He was denounced by the Fenian chief of police as a traitor, who was intentionally destroying the National party by promoting violent undertakings that only failed and caused exasperation. An American captain, the head of a circle, and some others, resolved that the man who made this charge should be assassinated. They pretended to agree with him, and proposed that Kelly should be seized and his papers examined. But when Kelly's opponent began to proceed he was mysteriously deserted by his own men, and he was forced to accept the offer made by the American officer of two of his men to do the work. The Fenian chief was led by those two men into an unfrequented spot, where a determined attempt to murder him was made, in the presence of two detectives. When he escaped he was taken by the police, and charged with being the assailant in a riot.¹

SECTION VIII.

While Massey was in prison at Kilmainham the Fenian officer who of the Dublin district sent for the chief of the Fenian police, him to assemble a sufficient party to rescue Massey, who, at n. on the following Friday, would be removed in a cab from , and driven unescorted through a specified route to Dublin w was all this circumstantial information obtained? was the ury. It was contained in a letter written by Massey, and his wife. That, if he were a true prisoner, he could get [those particulars—that his wife should be permitted to see ing from him such a letter—was, to the last degree, impro- was almost certain that Government was laying a trap for . Massey tested the matter in this way: word was sent to the ouncil that there was an intention to rescue the prisoner during .val. If, after this, Massey was sent with only a small escort, be clear that the police were tempting a rescue, and it was

¹ "Blackwood's Magazine," April, 1882.

resolved that no attempt of the kind would be made. But if he was sent with a formidable escort, they were determined to rescue him. On the appointed day, Massey was driven through the town accompanied by two policemen in plain clothes. It was concluded that he was a traitor. He appeared as an informer at the ensuing trials. The friends of the prisoners were anxious that those facts should be stated in court, but the counsel for the defence could not be induced to allow such evidence to be given.¹ That members of the legal profession should connive at, or at least be unwilling to take an active part in exposing, the secret but most active share taken by the police in Irish conspiracies, is intelligible, on purely professional grounds; that the Irish press should preserve a guarded silence on the subject, and Nationalists of unquestionable integrity should countenance the practice, and allow members of their own body to aid the police in some of their special objects, may be a matter of policy—concerning the fact there cannot be the doubt of a moment. O'Connell's agitation was impervious to police interference. Since his time the Nationalists and the police have intrigued with each other to a degree that is rather confusing to an outsider. "I could never understand," wrote Cluseret, "how the police could have seen, in broad daylight, and in the very heart of London, all the chiefs of the Irish centres assemble twice a day in a public place without any interference. Certainly they did not try to hide themselves. Was it collusion on the part of the police, or was it indifference, or was it want of skill in their profession?"

This mutual toleration and assistance could only exist where there were no strong religious or political differences. Where these intervened, tragic consequences might follow. Kelly became unpopular in Dublin, and was gradually left without any adherents. He went, or was sent, to Manchester. The police in Manchester were officered by Orangemen, and scarcely admitted the presence of a member of Liberal opinions in their ranks. The community had for some time been accustomed to extremely narrow anti-Catholic teaching, and the Irish residents were too few and too inferior in social grade to offer any material resistance to the flood of prejudice that was thus indiscriminately set in motion. Manchester had been distinguished for a peculiar type of Toryism. There is a fastidious refinement and an instinctive exclusiveness that is the acquired habit of many generations, and that in vulgar and arrogant minds becomes mere pride. There is also an affected sympathy with this social isolation, with an exact reversal of habits, which asserts itself by the profession of Conservative principles. The latter finds a favourite expression in contempt for Ireland and Irishmen.

SECTION IX.

At midnight, or early morning of the 11th September, 1862, two men were seen by a policeman, inviting notice by their movements in the streets of Manchester. One of them went and tapped twice at the door of a man named Wilson, in Smithfield Market, and then, saying "It's all right," entered the shop. The other did not enter, but went to the end of the market, looked around him, and then walked to the corner of

¹ "Fortnightly Review," March, 1882.

Whittle Street. The policeman's suspicion was aroused, and he whistled for assistance. Thereupon the man withdrew, and entered the shop; but he came to the door several times, and looked out, watching the policeman. The two men then left the shop, and loitered about in Oak Street. The constables, a second having arrived, approached them, when one of the men drew out a revolver, which was taken from him, and found to be capped and loaded. The second man was similarly armed. Neither of them made any greater resistance than the exhibition of their weapons. When they were brought before the magistrate, it might seem a hardship, the newspaper writer remarks, that they were not dismissed, so little ground did there seem for their detention. But Captain Palin, the chief constable, had no doubt some further information than that which was laid before the court, and applied for a remand. In good time it came out that these two men were Kelly and another member of the Fenian Brotherhood named Deasy. They were brought before the magistrates under their true names, and identified. Two telegrams, one from London, the other from Dublin, arrived, warning the Manchester authorities that a rescue was to be made. The policemen had similar information among themselves. The prisoners conducted themselves with the same cool bravado that had been exhibited by Stephens in the dock. Previous to leaving the court, one of the most active magistrates of the city expressed a strong opinion that the officers in charge of the prisoners should be armed. This advice was disregarded, but a show of precaution was made by placing five policemen on the box seat, and two on the step behind, of the van that carried the two men to Belle Vue Gaol, and by sending four other policemen in a cab following the van. All were unarmed. A denial was afterwards made of the receipt of the telegrams, and the Town Council attempted to stifle inquiry, but the fact was fully established. When the van reached a railway arch on the way it was attacked by twenty or thirty men armed with revolvers. Some of these stood round the van in a circle, while others attempted to break it open. Finding their work slow, and dreading the arrival of reinforcements of police, they demanded the keys of the vehicle from Sergeant Brett, who was locked in. He refused, and was shot through the head by one of the assailants—some said in an attempt to blow open the lock. The key was taken from his pocket by a female prisoner, and handed out through the ventilator. The door was unlocked, and the two Fenians led out.¹ The handcuffed prisoners escaped, and several of their rescuers were captured. Kelly remained for several weeks after in Manchester, in a public thoroughfare, within a dozen yards of a police barracks. Both men finally left the country, but were never admitted to the company of Fenians again.

SECTION X.

A Special Commission was appointed for the trial of the men who had caused the death of Brett, and commenced its proceedings on the 28th of October, before Justices Blackburn and Mellor. Five men, Allen, Larkin, Gould, Maguire, and Shore, were arraigned. The police-

¹ As Kelly stepped over the prostrate body of Brett he exclaimed, "Christ! what a lark!"

man who was nearest to the scene swore that Allen seemed to him to have fired for the purpose of knocking the lock off. It came out that the prisoners were identified at the police station by their being in chains. A clear *alibi* was proved for Maguire. All the prisoners were found guilty. In reply to the question what they had to say why sentence of death should not be passed, Allen asked was it possible the question was put why an Irishman should not be hanged in a case where an English dog would have got off! Gould said that his real name was O'Brien, and argued that English denunciation of foreign tyrannies was a direct encouragement to Irishmen to rebel. Larkin lamented Brett's death, which he said was caused by a misadventure, and at the hand of a man whom they had not got. Maguire declared that the witnesses had sworn falsely; that he was not present at the rescue. Shore said that his name was Condon, and that it was a surprise to him to be found guilty of murdering a man whom he had never seen. If a similar rescue had been made in a foreign country the English cities would have rung with applause. The unfortunate division of his countrymen at home and in America had paralysed all action, and he had only to submit to fate. He had nothing to retract or regret, and all he could say was, "God save Ireland!" All the other prisoners cried loudly, and in chorus, "God save Ireland!" Gould said: "I only wish to add that of all the acts of my political career I do not regret any. I do not know one single act that can bring a blush of shame to my face, or make me fear to meet my God or leave my fellow-men. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to serve in defence of the liberties of my country. If I can do so, I am content to die upon the scaffold, I hope, as a soldier, a man, and a Christian." Mr. Justice Mellor, in passing sentence of death, said that no persons who were present at the trial could doubt the justice of the verdict. The reporters of the London and provincial press who were present had no doubt of the injustice of the verdict. They sent a communication to the Home Office declaring their conviction that Maguire was falsely condemned, and he was pardoned. Condon was also reprieved. It was considered impossible that anyone could be put to death on a verdict thus discredited and disowned. But Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were hanged. O'Brien kissed Allen's cheek as they stood on the scaffold, and the drop fell. It was not the deed of England; it was not the deed of Lancashire; it was not the deed of Manchester—it was the deed of a small knot of official plotters—Irishmen, Welshmen, Orangemen, who blocked all the avenues of justice in Manchester, civil, municipal, and ecclesiastical, and took advantage of the time to advertise themselves as the centres of loyalty. Having caught those men in their toils, they thirsted to hang them, as an instance of their own supremacy and as an insult to Ireland, rendered more galling and more triumphant by the glaring injustice of the act. There is nothing the tyrant takes such pride in as crime under the form of law. Government, over-estimating the importance of those men, gratified them. The city was kept in a state of factitious alarm during the whole time. Thousands of soldiers and policemen guarded it. The prisoners were brought before the magistrates in chains.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DISESTABLISHMENT.

SECTION I.

THE Manchester rescue and execution bore far other fruit than the designers intended. Irish Nationalists all over the world recognised the three men, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, as martyrs, and celebrated their funeral obsequies with national pomp. Their bodies were buried in quicklime, in unconsecrated ground. Their memories will for ever be enshrined in the affections of their countrymen. No prayer from under the altar has ever ascended to heaven with such fervent pleading as the cry of the dying men, "God save Ireland!" The facts of the execution reached the knowledge of a young Irishman named Parnell, and, like letters cut on the bark of a tree, grew with his growing manhood. With him they were reasons for action, not incentives to passion. On the 13th of December a barrel of gunpowder was placed beside the wall of Clerkenwell Prison, where a Fenian leader was confined, and exploded. The officers of the gaol had been warned that an attack was intended, but they only confined the prisoner to his cell. Had he been near the place of the explosion he would have been killed. Twelve persons in the neighbouring houses perished, and a hundred and twenty were maimed. This was also the work of spies, who prompted the act, and left the agent to die on the scaffold.¹ The persons who set the agencies at work contemplated only the anger and hatred they would excite. They forgot that they were giving specimens of a mismanaged and unmeasured national strength. They were like men tapping a volcano to cause a momentary alarm, and calling the attention of thinking spectators to the tremendous underlying force that sooner or later must be dealt with.

SECTION II.

Attempts to exasperate England against Ireland were made in other fields. In an article on Ireland, in a magazine of wide circulation, the name of O'Connell is thus introduced without any apparent appropriateness: "When the famine was at its height, and the splendid subscriptions of the English were pouring into the country, we chanced to pay a visit to what was termed, as if in irony, Conciliation Hall. Presently Daniel O'Connell entered. He was then an old man, and wore a shabby red wig, forming a disagreeable contrast with his wrinkled face—a face with the same fixed smile noticeable in that of Pius IX. Over his broad shoulders hung the red robes of a Lord Mayor. His speech was not calculated to make him find favour in our eyes. It turned on the famine.

¹ "Blackwood" and "The Fortnightly Magazine."

. . . At last he said: 'And these subscriptions—these thousands of pounds they are sending to you, and of which we hear so much, do you think these English men and women—these Protestant English—care for your trouble? Do you think there is one iota of pity or sympathy in what they are doing? There is not a man in England cares in his heart one straw whether you live or rot! Shall I tell you why they send you this money? It is for this reason, and none else—they are afraid of you. Yes, the English are afraid of the Catholic Irish, and that is why they send money to stop your mouths. You are seven millions strong.'¹ O'Connell was never mayor except in 1841. At the time referred to he was dead or dying in a distant land. The sentiments ascribed to him misrepresent him as much as if he were said to have spoken in the language of the Hottentots.

SECTION III.

The Fenian conspiracy consisted of a distinct class of the population, and ran far ahead of all its patriotic competitors. Another plane of the nation's life was left for the legal discussion of moderate aims. The Church establishment had ceased to be a practical grievance, but it deformed the political landscape, even in the eyes of English Liberals. In 1861, a correspondence took place between Mr. O'Neill Daunt and the English Liberation Society. The *Morning Star* accustomed English readers for the first time to a dispassionate and respectful treatment of Irish affairs in an English journal. An alliance between the Catholic bishops and English Radicals was arranged in 1864, and a meeting was convened by the Lord Mayor of Dublin to inaugurate a new association. At this meeting a letter was read from Mr. John Bright, recommending the popular party in Ireland to adopt "Free Land and Free Church" as its policy, and the national association was founded with those objects. In 1866 Mr. Bright was entertained at a great national banquet in Dublin. Dr., then Sir John, Gray published in his *Freeman's Journal* a series of able reports on the history and position of the Established Church in Ireland. The Orange party gave the necessary sting to the growing organisation by their opposition. All these preparations would be forgotten in the insensible progress of events had not the English Liberals at the time been in want of a rallying cry. In 1866, and again in 1867, Sir John Gray made ineffectual attempts to carry resolutions hostile to the Irish Establishment. In March, 1868, Mr. Maguire moved for a select committee to consider the state of Ireland, but withdrew his motion on the delivery of a speech by Mr. Gladstone, in which he declared that the Irish Church must be disestablished. On the 23rd, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of three resolutions on the subject, the first declaring it necessary that the Established Church in Ireland should cease to exist. This resolution was carried on the 30th of April by 330 to 265 votes. On the 14th of May, Mr. Gladstone asked for leave to bring in a bill preventing for a time fresh appointments in the Irish Church. This bill was read a third time on the 16th of June, and on the 29th was rejected in the Lords by 192 to 97. Parliament was dissolved

¹ "Fraser's Magazine," October, 1865, p. 412.

in November, and in December the elections resulted in a large Liberal majority. Mr. Gladstone formed a Cabinet and took office.

SECTION IV.

On March the 1st, 1869, the Premier introduced a measure disestablishing and disendowing the Irish Church, and commuting the grants hitherto enjoyed by the Presbyterian Church and the College of Maynooth. The value of the property to be taken possession of by the State would amount to fifteen millions. Of this sum ten millions were to be given back to the Church, and the balance applied to purposes of general utility. The partial endowment was to be supplemented by voluntary contributions. The act was to come into operation on January the 1st, 1871. On the motion for the second reading, Mr. Disraeli argued that the same principle of living on voluntary contributions, or more correctly on earned contributions, might be extended from ecclesiastical to civil life. This argument is characteristic of Mr. Disraeli. He must have seen that if his suggestion carried any weight it must lie in its reasonableness. He pretended to be ignorant that proved conditions of English life may have the value of first principles, and that by tacit consent lay property is held on social obligations, as Church property is held on religious obligations. Disraeli was never in earnest. He did not work: he only amused himself. He was a Tory because he meant to succeed by humouring the foibles of a party. With some trivial alterations the bill received the Royal assent on the 26th of July, 1869.

SECTION V.

During the passage of the Disestablishment Bill through the House of Lords, Lord Hatherly, the Lord Chancellor, said, in reply to its opponents: "Well, I am to consider whether this dangerous, this fearful, this ill-timed bill is sacrilegious; and perhaps I ought to add, as the first approach to all these evils, that which the right rev. prelate ascribed to it the other night—its undying hostility to the Protestant religion.' And that, too, is cheered! Well, my lords, I am a Protestant, and have always been a Protestant; and I am also a Catholic, and have always been so. I adhere strictly, and have always adhered through my life, and I hope I shall to the end of it, to those principles which induced the great reformers of the Church to clear it of those abuses which had accumulated round it. Yet, I give my adhesion to this bill. . . .

"But we are told that we are committing sacrilege in dealing with the funds devoted to what is called the National Church in Ireland. That question was admirably dealt with by the right rev. prelate (the Bishop of St. David's) who has spoken with such grave and statesmanlike wisdom in the course of this debate, and who illustrated the point by the example of St. Ambrose. But I think I can rest upon higher authority even than that. We are about to take that which has been devoted hitherto to teaching the religion of our Saviour. We would willingly have it devoted, if it were practicable, to the teaching of that faith to the whole of the Irish people. But we find it impossible. And are there not other

uses to which, without committing sacrilege, it may be devoted? There was One who was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; who went about healing the sick, and curing those who were paralytic, and restoring to their right reason those whose minds were distracted—and here I must remark that there has been an attempt to raise a foolish laugh because it is proposed to devote the funds of the Church to some of the like purposes. Would He have regarded such uses as those to which we hope to apply this money as sacrilegious? Are we not following His example, and treading in His footsteps, in so applying funds which cannot be directly applied to the purposes for which they were originally intended?

"I come next to the Treaty of Union, on which, to my surprise, the noble earl who commenced the debate last night (the Earl of Derby) insisted. He said that the Irish Parliament was dissolved on the faith of the Act of Union, and that that document contained clauses which were to be binding upon us for ever. The noble and learned lord (Lord Chelmsford) went on to say that the Irish Parliament, being deceased, was like a testator—such was the image which he employed—who had bequeathed property on conditions, and by whom you could no longer be released, because he was dead, and that, therefore, you must be bound for ever by the conditions which he had imposed in his will. Now I, for one, do not regret the decease of that testator. I think if we did not reflect a little sometimes on some of the modes by which its end was brought about, we might say of the Irish Parliament that

Nothing in its life
Became it like the leaving it.

The Irish Parliament, no doubt, professed to be a national Parliament; but, in point of fact, it was just as much a national Parliament as the Church of Ireland is a national church. The argument of the oath and the question of the Treaty of Union both depend upon the same fallacy—the fallacy of supposing it possible, under any circumstances, to bind all future generations of men to a certain course of policy simply by the use of those two words 'For ever.' They are very vain and presumptuous words to apply to any construction of man, whether material or moral. They are not for man's use. They are worse than presumptuous—they are foolish, because they mislead those who can be misled; they entangle those who can be entangled by such cobwebs; and they prevent those reforms by which alone there is the slightest chance of anything in this world approximating to duration. The moment you cease to advance, and say, 'Here we will stand for ever,' from that moment you begin to decay, and to advance rapidly towards your ruin. Those who trust in the words 'For ever,' and who, from a timid superstition, forbear to march on in the path of improvement, which indicates the life both of nations and individuals, will find that there are two other words, more sad, which have composed the *hic jacet* of many a noble institution, the words 'Too late.'

"I come now to the second part of the amendment—the application of the surplus. This is a great and serious question, and I have a word to say as to the tone in which it has been treated by the same noble

marquis who told us the other day that all hollow enthusiasm had ceased on this subject of the application of the surplus. He told us on more than one occasion—nay, on three nights I noticed that in this debate he condescended to make remarks as to the proposed application for the benefit of lunatics—and he said that, after all, if he had to choose, he would as soon hand over the surplus to landlords as to lunatics. As the noble earl said, ‘I can take a joke as well as any man,’ but there are some subjects that are not to be joked upon; and I do say that the application of funds for the relief mainly of infirm persons and of lunatics is not a subject for joking. He who was the greatest master of human nature that ever lived among us, in one of his plays, makes the heroine say to her lover, who is described as

A man replete with words,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which he on all estates would execute
That lay within the mercy of his wit,

that to wean himself of this propensity he must visit a hospital, for

That's the way to choke a gibing spirit.”

SECTION VI.

Mr. Gladstone, in a much criticised speech, accounted for his conduct on the Irish Church by reference to Fenian outrages. “Circumstances occurred,” he said, “which drew the attention of people to the Irish Church. I said myself it was out of the range of practical politics—that is, politics of the coming election. When it came to this, that a great gap in the heart of the Metropolis was broken open under circumstances which drew the attention of English people to the state of Ireland, and when a Manchester policeman was murdered in the exercise of his duty, at once the whole country became alive to Irish questions, and the question of the Church revived.” A statesman could as correctly give the Manchester rescue as a reason for disestablishing the Church as a physician could assign a cutaneous eruption as a ground for prescribing an alterative treatment. But while the physician is something distinct from the disease, the statesman is a great part of it. The malady of Ireland is that an English statesman has the disposal of her lot. No English minister is ever quite unconscious of this. The Tory sees it, insists that it must be so, and regards outrage as an act of rebellion that must first be crushed. The Liberal sees, and regards outrage as a symptom that measures the severity of the disease and the need of its abatement. Gladstone saw in the Manchester rescue and the Clerkenwell explosion reason for relaxing the rigour of conquest. But in whatever spirit concessions are made, there will always be this secret consciousness that the power of granting or withholding boons and concessions is itself the fundamental wrong, that must at last be apparent to all, as sod after sod is removed under which the living liberties of the country lie buried.

SECTION VII.

An effort was now consistently made to obtain an amnesty for the condemned Fenians. Butt became president of the association formed for the purpose in 1869, and henceforth became a leader in the popular cause. As the amnesty agitation showed no signs of success, Tipperary returned O'Donovan Rossa as its representative, and Parliament declared him disqualified. In January, 1871, the prisoners were released on condition of leaving the country.

CHAPTER XXV.

LAND TENURE.

SECTION I.

THE felling of one grievance after another, in a forest of wrong, only exposes in clearer light those that remain, and gives wider sweep for the stroke of the axe. The condition of Ireland with regard to land tenure had been for a long time one of accepted warfare. The landlords knew that their claims were unsuitable and mischievous to the community, were maintained for them only by England, and exposed them to the vengeance of their tenants. But they took power, as men generally do, with its liabilities. They chose rather to climb the mountain crags, with the chance of falling, than to walk in safety on the plain. The tenants were allowed the rights of combatants. Exterminators and assassins fought their battles with the enjoyment of conscious courage. The landlords did not wish for legal interference. The system, they said, worked very well on the whole. They preferred unlimited power, with the risk of being shot, to security and restricted license. Assassination was spoken of as something suited to the state of things. It balanced the weight of English usurpation, which, otherwise, would be unendurable. Some Englishmen began to see how the case stood.

On the opening of Parliament (February 8th, 1870) the Queen's Speech announced an amendment of the laws respecting the occupation and acquisition of land in Ireland, calculated to bring about improved relations between those concerned. In the House of Lords, Lord Cairns, in the debate on the Address, insisted that the object for which a government exists is the prevention of outrage and the enforcement of security of life and property. He thus opposed the prevention of outrage by direct repression to prevention of outrage by amendment of laws, as the business of government. The beginning and end of governmental duty, therefore, was to suppress discontent and maintain existing conditions. A gang of bandits or burglars retiring from trade and entering on the enjoyment of their booty would heartily acquiesce in this definition. But an English Ministry stand in another character than that of government. They are representatives of the people, elected to consider and determine what it is that constitutes outrage and property, and to enact such laws as shall settle property on a basis that does not compel outrage. The object, therefore, for which government exists is to repress outrage by the enactment of wise laws concerning property. On the 15th of February Mr. Gladstone introduced a Land Bill, which gave a legal status to the Ulster tenant-right custom, and to similar customs in other parts of Ireland, conferred new rights on tenants with reference to compensation for disturbance by the act of the landlord, gave compensa-

tion for improvements, and facilitated the sale of land to tenants. The point on which the whole debate turned was freedom of contract. It was argued that the landlord and tenant should be allowed to make any bargain they chose, and that whatever bargain they made the tenant could not complain of it since he made it voluntarily. As a matter of fact he could be said to make it voluntarily only so far as a man taken up at sea by a vessel might engage voluntarily to allow himself to be cast out again, if the captain wished it. Mr. Disraeli maintained that the landlords would protect themselves against this law by taking every opportunity of evicting for non-payment of rent. Farms would become consolidated, and the very farmers for whom this enactment was meant would be swept off the surface of the soil. This argument meant that the law did not go far enough, and that, so long as the landlord had it in his power to raise his tenants' rents, and to evict them for nonpayment, he would be able to defy any law that was made for the tenants' protection. Unless they passed a law restricting the landlord's power of rack-renting and evicting it would be better to do nothing. The speaker took for granted, or pretended to do so—for his belief and pretence of belief are indistinguishable in such matters—that legislation could never rise to this height. The bill passed, and received the Royal assent on the 1st of August. Mr. Disraeli was quite correct in his estimate of the law and the landlords, of the liability of the law to be evaded, and the readiness of the landlords to evade it. Laws are only fingerposts that point in certain directions. The relations of life would not be endurable unless the spirit of law intervened between the contracting parties. The various discussions and the preliminary legislation on the land question in Ireland were only warnings and admonitions to the Irish landlord to use his power humanely and reasonably. This he never would do so long as he was amenable to only a British Parliament, in which Irish members were an ineffectual minority. The English majority, he felt, would never desert him. So he refused to go in the direction which this law indicated. Some landlords set themselves to reject its provisions; others drew up leases deliberately designed to defeat them. Any unscrupulous landlord could rack-rent and evict as before. In the three years before the act the number of ejectments brought or notices to quit was 4,388. In the three years after the number was 5,641. In the three subsequent years 8,439 such notices were served. It was obvious that unless the Irish representation in Parliament was conducted in such a way that its activity would compensate for its paucity, its voice raised and its attitude taken as became the voice and attitude that represented a nation, not an outnumbered party, no laws meeting the necessities of the case would ever be enacted. In fact there was no hope till the Irish members swelled their power in Parliament to the volume and dimensions of Irish public opinion.

SECTION II.

Mr. Disraeli had asserted in 1868 that the disestablishment of the Irish Church would be equivalent to a foreign conquest. This phrase expressed the latent feelings of Englishmen on which un-English politicians

like Lyndhurst and Disraeli desire to trade. No Englishman would affirm that Ireland was a conquered country, and should be treated as such. Yet every demand that is made by Ireland is looked on as the struggle of a captive in chains. When Peel said that though all Ireland demanded repeal, it would not be granted, he spoke in the angry arrogance of conquest. He regarded O'Connell as one who was endeavouring to undo a conquest, or, as Disraeli put it, to effect a "foreign conquest;" and as legitimate constitutional agitation disallowed such language, he attempted to drag O'Connell outside the constitution and to turn Clontarf into a Vinegar Hill. This was the prejudice to which Disraeli appealed. This was the inflammable under-feeling which he played with. "You must conquer, or be conquered," he meant to say. "Those men who resist you are foreigners; refuse their demands, and keep them your conquered subjects."

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOME RULE.

SECTION I.

WHEN the Church was disestablished a number of Protestants felt themselves cast off by England, and grew into sympathy with the national aspirations. A meeting was held in Dublin on the 19th of May, 1870, of men of various religious and political opinions, to consider the wants of the country. Butt made the principal speech, and he concluded by proposing: "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish Parliament, with full control over our domestic affairs." The resolution was carried unanimously. Had the Protestant landlords joined in this conclusion, the Union would have been established on the basis of landlordism, regulated, like English landlordism, by domestic interests and national opinion. But the world's progress is promoted as much by the resistance as the help of men. They still preferred to rack rent and evict under the shelter of zealous loyalty to England, not seeing, in their blindness, what loyalty to England would soon require of them. A committee on resolutions was charged with the formulation of the national demands, and drew up a report embodying the objects of an organisation, to be called "The Home Government Association of Ireland." Those objects may be stated in a single clause: the obtaining for their country the right and privilege of managing their own affairs, by a parliament assembled in Ireland, composed of her Majesty the Sovereign and the Lords and Commons of Ireland. The objection with which Irish demands for home government are resisted—that they do not enter sufficiently into particulars—is as if one should refuse the request of a hungry man for food, on the ground that he did not specify the precise kind or quantity which he wanted, or the request of a naked man for a garment because he did not state its stuff and dimensions. England never got an instalment of her constitution in reply to an exact statement of her particular needs. It is impossible to tell beforehand what the adaptations of any law to circumstances must be, because time only can tell. The constant amendments of Acts of Parliament that are required are a convincing proof. This exaction of particulars indicates not difficulty, but unwillingness. Every person acquainted with Irishmen knew that the moment a veritable scheme of home government was offered to them their gratitude would accommodate itself to its conditions. Such was the beginning of the Home Rule movement.

SECTION II.

The Home Rule party soon found fields of enterprise and victory in several bye-elections. John Martin, who had been transported in 1848, an Ulster Presbyterian and a Home Ruler, was returned for Meath by

1,140 against 684 votes polled for Mr. Plunkett, a Catholic aristocrat, backed by Cardinal Cullen, the priests, and the Castle; Mr. Mitchel Henry, a Protestant and Home Ruler, was returned without a contest for Galway county; Mr. P. J. Smyth, one of the Confederate fugitives of 1848, was returned for Westmeath county, and Mr. Butt had an unopposed return for Limerick. In the beginning of 1872 two more seats became vacant. Captain Nolan, aided by the Archbishop of Tuam, defeated Mr. Trench, son of Lord Clancarty, in Galway; and Mr. R. P. Blennerhassett, a Protestant Home Ruler, was triumphantly returned in opposition to Mr. Dease, a cousin to the Earl of Kenmare, in Kerry. Mr. Dease had the support of the Catholic bishop and of the O'Connell family. The O'Donoghue, who had lately deserted the popular party, in which he had been a favourite leader, also took his side, and supported his conduct by citing a letter from Mr. John Bright: "It is said," Mr. Bright wrote, "some persons engaged in the canvass of the county of Kerry have spoken of me as an advocate of what is termed Home Rule in Ireland. I hope no one will venture to say anything so absurd and untrue. If it has been said by anyone of any authority in the county, I will feel obliged if you contradict it. To have two legislative assemblies or parliaments in the United Kingdom would, in my opinion, be an intolerable mischief, and I think no sensible man can wish for two within the limit of the present United Kingdom who does not wish the United Kingdom to become two or more nations entirely separate from each other. Excuse my troubling you with this. It is no duty of mine to interfere with your contest, but I do not wish to be misrepresented." If it was not the duty of Mr. Bright to interfere with the expression of the constituencies at the poll, it is not easy to see how it could be his duty to interfere with the expressions of their representatives in Parliament. And since Mr. Bright did interfere, notwithstanding that it was no duty of his, we have to seek his motive outside the plane of ordinary political feeling, in some of those personal or national resentments which have served instead of reason, in England's dealing with Ireland, during so many centuries. Mr. Bright's language, "absurd and untrue," "intolerable mischief," "no sensible man," "two or more nations entirely separate," is Tory language, and savours of Tory intolerance. This is apart from the merits of the case. Whether Home Rule for Ireland is good or bad is one question; whether the Irish have a right to Home Rule if they prove it to be good is another. The latter point must be conceded before the first is discussed; but Mr. Bright will not even discuss it.

SECTION III.

The Galway election led to very bitter litigation. The unvarying result, under varying circumstances, of all these elections point to the popular will as the determining power. The people voted for Home Rule candidates, whether their ecclesiastical rulers encouraged them or endeavoured to dissuade them. It would be a work of supererogation to interfere unless in opposition to landlord dictation. In Galway the contest was between the landed proprietors and the priests. They who

consider either influence legitimate will condemn the other. A petition was presented against Capt. Nolan's return, and it was tried before Mr. Justice Keogh. One is reminded again and again by Keogh's presidency at various trials of a horrible scene in recent Irish history, when some condemned men, coming on the scaffold to be executed, discovered in the executioner the man who had prompted the crime, and then turned informer. Judge Keogh was incapable of conscientious scruples, but he could be swayed by that wild frenzy of resentment that takes the place of remorse in some minds. The men whom he had betrayed never ceased exposing and denouncing him. He now had an opportunity of retaliating from the seat of authority which his treason had won. The circumstances of his promotion magnified his obligation to his patrons, and he interpreted their expectations from him by the qualities of which they knew him to be possessed. His demeanour on the bench was unparalleled even in the land of partisan judges. His sentiments and his language were commonplace, vulgar, ludicrous; but the passion of the man was such that they issued from his lips flaming as from a furnace mouth. His shot was the refuse and garbage of the streets, but the explosive vehemence of his mind was such that they came forth with the momentum of iron balls. He gave his decision in a judgment that occupied nine hours in the delivery. He condemned the priestly influences used in favour of Capt. Nolan, and panegyrised the counter-combination of the landlords on behalf of Capt. Trench. He of course invalidated the election. The Nationalist and Catholic press retorted upon him. His past life supplied an inexhaustible arsenal of abuse. They need only fling him at himself. He bore it all, not with equanimity, but with the repellent rage that was constitutional with him. He rejoiced in the tempest he had raised. He was loaded with vituperation; he was burned in effigy; his deposition from the bench was clamoured for in and out of Parliament; he was protested against by Cardinal Cullen and his assembled priesthood. But he was supported by all haters of Rome and Irish nationality. He strove to ruin Capt. Nolan by accumulated costs, but a public subscription delivered him from the responsibility. Judge Keogh died on the Continent, in 1878, insane.

SECTION IV.

To many Englishmen it will seem inconsiderate, to use no stronger term, that a new agitation should follow so close on the disestablishment of the Church and the amendment of the land laws. We measure our concessions by the violence they do to our pride, and by their implied recognition of general principles. The disestablishment of the Church did not lighten the burthens of the people. The amended land laws gave a fresh motive for evictions. In 1871 Lord Hartington moved for a committee to inquire into an unlawful confederacy existing in Westmeath and the adjoining districts. Mr. Disraeli mockingly told the Government that they were quite wrong in coming before the House dismayed and daunted by the disturbed condition of Ireland. This should be their language: "It is true that murder is committed with impunity; it is true that life is not secure, and that property has no

enjoyment, and scarcely any existence; but this is nothing when, in the enjoyment of abstract political justice—and by the labours of two years we have achieved that for Ireland—massacres, incendiarism, and assassinations are things scarcely to be noticed by a Minister, and are rather to be referred to the inquiry of a committee. The First Minister persuaded the country that with regard to Ireland he had the philosopher's stone in his pocket, and was accordingly returned with an immense Parliamentary majority. Had anything been grudged him? Time, labour, devotion—whatever had been demanded had been accorded, whatever had been proposed had been carried. Under his influence and at his instance we had legalised confiscation, we had consecrated sacrilege, we had condoned high treason, we had destroyed churches, we had shaken property to its foundation, and we had emptied gaols; and now he could not govern a country, and he must come to a Parliamentary committee. The right hon. gentleman, after all his heroic exploits, and at the head of his great majority, was simply making Government ridiculous." When Mr. Disraeli referred to the abstract justice that had been achieved for Ireland, he admitted that only abstract justice had been done, and at the same time he taunted the Ministry with not daring to go further, and terrified his own party with the tendency of what had been done. He asserted that property had scarcely any existence; and he had previously predicted, and now acknowledged, that this interference with property contained no alleviation or redress for those who were under its rule. When he said that abstract justice—that is, the recognition of tenant right—did not prevent disturbances in Ireland, he meant that it had not prevented cruel evictions. "Do nothing, or do all," was the constant gist of his speeches on Irish affairs. "Maintain your conquest unimpaired, or suffer yourselves to be conquered." He fostered and threw on the natural tendency of men to defend their dishonest more jealously than their honest acquisitions.

SECTION V.

In this debate Sir R. Peel made a declaration that expresses the conviction of every Englishman. "If a member of the royal family were brought into Ireland," he said, "it would have the effect of enlisting in favour of imperial interests the kindly sympathies and generous hearts of the Irish people." Why, then, it may be asked, seeing that the pacification of Ireland is so anxiously sought and may be so easily won, are not the requisite measures taken? When Englishmen contemplate the loyalty of Irishmen, they mean loyalty to the Englishmen's monarch. They do not invite Irishmen to be loyal fellow-subjects to a common throne, much less do they offer an opportunity of being loyal to a monarch or prince of their own. Irishmen are expected to be loyal to the English monarch. Ireland is expected to be loyal to England. Each Irishman is expected to be the loyal subject of each Englishman. If this be not a true representation, why, then, does not the Queen reside for a time in Ireland? Why is not a royal prince sent to Ireland? Why does not the Parliament occasionally sit in Ireland?

SECTION VI.

On the 29th of February, 1872, a boy named Arthur O'Connor presented an unloaded pistol at the Queen, with the professed view of compelling her to release some imprisoned Fenians. He was brought up for trial on the 11th of April, and pleaded guilty. His counsel argued that the prisoner was incompetent to plead, as he was insane, and a jury was empaneled to try this question. The boy's father, influenced by some medical men, Drs. Tuke, Maudsley, and others, gave evidence to show that his son was insane. He was asked by the Attorney-General whether he wished that his son should pass his life in a lunatic asylum, and he replied that he did not. He was asked if he was aware that such would be the result of his acquittal on the plea of insanity. He answered that he was aware of it. Dr. Tuke, who was rallied by the Attorney-General with having intruded into the matter gratuitously and uncalled for, was asked whether it was not a more sensible course for the prisoner to plead guilty than to get shut up for the rest of his life at Broadmoor, as must be the result if Dr. Tuke's evidence was received as conclusive. The witness gave no answer. The jury interposed, and said they were unanimously of opinion that the prisoner was of a perfectly sound mind. His plea of guilty was then received, and he was sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for one year, and to receive twenty strokes with a birch rod.¹ This sentence was never carried out. The prisoner's term of imprisonment was shortened, he was not subjected to hard labour, and the flogging was never inflicted; and he finally received an outfit, and was sent to Australia. The case provoked comment, and steps were taken to let it appear that the lad was really insane. Towards the close of 1873 it was announced that he wrote letters to the Queen, and fears were expressed that he would return to England. Of course his return could have been easily prevented had any fears been felt. In June, 1875, it was announced in a London newspaper that he had returned, and he was described as having been acquitted in 1872 on the ground of insanity.² In the Annual Register for 1875, it is recorded that he came back to England, and was sent to Hanwell Lunatic Asylum.

On the 16th December, 1872, at the Liverpool Police Court, before Mr. Raffles, the stipendiary magistrate, Joseph or Thomas Egan, an Irishman, and described as a marine-store dealer at Prescott, was brought up by warrant on two charges, the one of high treason, and the second of attempting to induce Frederick William O'Connor to desert from his regiment, the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers. It was agreed that as the charge of treason would involve a repetition of offensive and disgusting language, the second charge should only be gone into. It appeared that on the 12th inst. the prisoner went to Liverpool to see the prosecutor's father on business, and while there he asked the young man to go with him to a public-house in Leeds Street. While they were standing at the bar, the prisoner, after assuring himself that none of the people of the house could overhear him, asked the prosecutor to "throw off his uniform and take the Fenian oath." The prisoner also told the prosecutor to remember his ancient name, O'Connor, and, raising a glass

¹ Ann. Reg., 1872, p. 11. ² *London Guardian*, June 2nd, 1872.

of ale to his lips, proposed a Fenian toast, which he asked the prosecutor to drink. The prosecutor indignantly declined, and told the prisoner he should report his conduct, as was his duty, at the proper quarter, and left the house. He was quickly followed by the prisoner, who observed, "You'd better mind what you're about; you'll think better of it when I see you again." Mr. Sowton, who appeared for the prisoner, said the prisoner wished to be represented by counsel, and asked that the case might be adjourned. Mr. Davis, who prosecuted, agreed to the adjournment. After the prisoner's apprehension the police visited his place at Prescot, and found a blunderbus, several rifles, pistols, revolvers, balls, and powder. The prisoner was discharged.¹

On the 8th of September, 1873, a young man named Connor was executed at Kirkdale Gaol for a murder. The man's guilt could not have been perfectly clear, as the jury at first could not agree. At the execution the rope gave way, and a scene of horror occurred that made the case known throughout the kingdom. The executioner insisted that the rope had not broken, but that the "splicing had slipped," and suspicion was raised that it had been tampered with by those who had charge of it the preceding night.

SECTION VII.

One of the disadvantages of a Government such as that exercised by England over Ireland is, that legislation never comes at the right time. Constitutions are not made. They must grow. No constitution, or adaptation of ideas and habits to laws or circumstances, has ever been allowed to grow in Ireland. Legislation is conducted in capricious jerks, and by different hands. In a country that makes its own laws, or is left to accommodate itself to them, things gradually adjust themselves to each other. Opposing interests and hostile creeds learn mutual tolerance from the necessity of the case, as husbands and wives, just in proportion to the interval of separate freedom and power, make the best of what, under more stringent conditions, would often be an unhappy union. But the Irish landlord does not reconcile himself to the wants of his tenant, nor the Irish Protestant to the prejudices of his Catholic neighbour, because his political affections have been taught to wander to English landlordism and English Protestantism. A foreign mistress incites domestic feuds. Irish laws are made when England thinks fit; and when what she thinks the fit time has come, she expects Ireland to be grateful, whereas the great probability is that fresh necessities have arisen, and that a far more advanced law is required. In 1871 all tests were abolished in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It seemed accordingly that Ireland was ripe for a similar measure. Tests were therefore abolished in the University of Dublin in 1873. The difference between the two countries was, that while in England Church-of-Englandism and Nonconformity had been approximating towards each other, in Ireland the religion of the Establishment and Roman Catholicism had each been strengthening in self-reliance and exclusiveness. Had Trinity College been thrown open to Roman Catholics half a

¹ *Manchester Examiner and Times*, December 17, 1872. *Liverpool Mercury*, March 26, 1877.—
"Answers to Correspondents."

century earlier, it might have been received as a boon. But the Catholics had been forced to depend on their own resources, and they now reached the need of a Catholic university, and the courage to say they needed it. On the 13th of February in this same year, Mr. Gladstone brought in a bill which proposed to abolish the Queen's University and the Dublin University, and to substitute a central establishment, to which the Queen's Colleges, Trinity College, and the Catholic College should be affiliated. This plan seemed perfect at first sight, and would have been so in effect, if separate claims had not grown and open rivalry been established. In the abstract it was right, but it was impracticable. The two creeds had acquired habits of authority and self-assertion that put dwelling under the same roof out of the question. To use Mr. Gladstone's words, "The Roman Catholic prelacy of Ireland thought fit to procure the rejection of the measure by the direct influence which they exercised over a certain number of Irish members of Parliament, and by the temptation which they thus offered—the bid, in effect, which (to use a homely phrase) they made, to attract the support of the Tory Opposition."¹ The bill was lost at its second reading by a majority of three. Mr. Gladstone resigned, but, on Mr. Disraeli's declining to take office, resumed his place. A controversy which ensued on the duties of Roman Catholics to the State lost itself in casuistry and detail.

Every man carries in his own hand the power of defending his life, his honour, and his family against injustice. Nothing can deprive him of this power. He has a right to exercise it in opposition to the State. If the State proceeds to destroy him, it commits the sin of sins; and he has a right to appeal to God through His representative in priest or pope. There is only one way in which the State can maintain its power over him, and that is by doing him justice. The Church of Rome is a protest against the tyranny of governments. Its strength will increase in proportion as it maintains this character and as the usurpations of society blot out Heaven. National churches will prevail against it only when they denounce the abuses of wealth and of civic power.

SECTION VIII.

Towards the close of the year the council of the Home Government Association sent out a requisition for signature calling a conference of all who were favourable to these principles. It was signed by 25,000 persons in a few weeks. The conference was held on the 18th of November. It consisted of nearly 900 delegates, and was presided over by Mr. Shaw, M.P., a Protestant. The programme of the association was adopted, and, the association being dissolved, a new organisation, the "Irish Home Rule League," was established. While they were engaged in planning methods of revising the registry, and finding candidates and funds for the general election, which was expected at no very remote date, news came that Parliament was dissolved (Jan. 24th, 1874). They had to hurry to the field with all their preparations incomplete. But the spirit of the people supplied every deficiency. Sixty Home Rulers were returned, eleven of them Protestants. The two creeds were becom-

¹ "Vatican Decrees," p. 60.

ing reconciled by the presence of common wants and wishes. They formed themselves into a distinct party, with regular party officers in the House of Commons, and with Mr. Butt at their head. The election proved disastrous to English Liberalism. Mr. Disraeli took office at the head of 360 followers.

SECTION IX.

On the 30th of June Mr. Butt brought the Home Rule question before the House of Commons. He argued the historical, financial, and legislative particulars of the case, and showed how the country prospered before the Union and decayed after it. "Ireland," he said, "no longer possessed constitutional freedom. The press was not free." (Here the House indulged in laughter.) "The Coercion Acts in force surpassed in severity the laws of any country in Europe." The Premier having drawn an "amusing sketch" of the entanglement of the two coterminous Parliaments, passed to the grievances to be remedied. The Lord-Lieutenant was not an Irishman; well, but he was an Irish duke. The high offices in Ireland were not held by Irishmen; but the Lord Chancellor in England was an Irishman. "But the great point of the speech, made peculiarly telling by the animation of the speaker, excited by the almost unanimous sympathetic cheering of a crowded House, was his allusion to the 'conquered race.' He declared that there was to him nothing more extraordinary than the determination of the Irish people to proclaim to the world that they are a subjugated people." "I have always been surprised," he said, "that a people gifted with so much genius, so much sentiment, such winning qualities, should be—I am sure they will pardon me for saying it: my remark is an abstract and not a personal one—should be so deficient in self-respect." The remark caused great laughter. "I deny," said the right hon. gentleman, raising his voice, "that the Irish are conquered; they are proud of it. I deny that they have any grounds for that pride." The laughter here became uproarious. A happier piece of pleasantry and shrewd description of an Irish weakness was never listened to.¹ Such was the reply given by the Prime Minister of England to the arguments of a majority of the Irish members, who spoke the hopes of waiting millions, and who were seeking to bring their country's cause from the conspirator's den and the assassin's shelter into the region of legitimate and dignified debate. On a subsequent occasion he is described as "preserving with admirable effect his provoking attitude towards the Irish members. It was one of the finest bits of Parliamentary fencing seen for many years. Disraeli never moved a pace. He stood impassively in the ring, with a buttoned foil lightly held in his hand; and if awkward people wildly ran against it, wounding themselves and knocking each other over in the rout, was *he* to blame?"² Mr. Disraeli was turning the House of Commons into a theatre, in which the part was secondary to the acting. Any outbreak of genuine passion that aroused the country from the fascination of this foolery was desirable, and could not be long delayed.

¹ Ann. Register, 1874, p. 59.

² "A Diary of Two Parliaments," p. 65.

SECTION X.

When we speak of law or government in reference to subjects or rebels, we do not fairly balance our propositions. Law—stately, omnipotent, and infallible—is opposed to a rabble of men. In reality, law has no more of an abstract existence than subjection or rebellion. What we have to do with is rulers and subjects. All is human, weak, and fallible, or great and soaring. Laws do not administer themselves. They are administered by men, to whom the possession of power is as great a temptation or inspiration as resistance to power is to the rebel. This seems commonplace, but commonplace things are the atmosphere in which the light of history shines. Moses' seat and the men who sit in Moses' seat are different. What we take to be law or government, because of the place from which it issues, is often human passion. In January, 1875, Col. White, the Home Rule member for Tipperary, abandoned his party and his seat. John Mitchel, who had escaped from his place of exile, was returned unopposed, February 16th, and landed at Queenstown the next day. The Prime Minister immediately gave notice of a motion declaring him incapable of sitting in Parliament. No man ever inveighed in such unmeasured terms against English authority in Ireland as John Mitchel. But whatever other feelings Englishmen may have entertained, they always respected him. He now sought to take a share in the proceedings of the legislative assembly of the United Kingdom. There would have been a tinge of that olden chivalry that retained no bitterness when the strife was over if he was permitted to have his way. He was a Saxon and a Protestant—too Saxon and too Protestant for his own peace. Fortune had been very unkind to him. His spirit of defiance was only the armour such men wear against the world's enmity. He might have been disarmed now by a little show of sympathy with his sufferings. He hated anti-Irish England; could they not afford for once to cease to be anti-Irish and thaw the tenderness that, through long years of frenzied effort and unvaried disappointment, lay frozen at his heart? Who can tell what the effect on Ireland might have been? He was said to be a felon according to their law; could they not find some higher law in the case of a dying man who had lived only for his idea of justice? His life had been one incessant struggle with shipwreck, and now he might have reached the haven with one troubled sunbeam upon him through the broken clouds. Could not Englishmen suffer him? It was in them to do it. It is pleasant to read that they debated the matter without hostile prepossession. They wavered and inclined to yield. The House of Commons was never greater as men than at that moment, and the record of it will live. Some question had been raised about Mitchel's having broken his parole. "If John Mitchel," said Mr. Martin, "forfeited his honour, I, John Martin, member for Meath, whom you call honourable, did so, too." No one called John Martin honourable in a formal sense. Lord Hartington and Mr. Forster urged that the matter should be referred to a select committee, but Mr. Disraeli must exhibit his mock patriotism. "It is part of my duty," he said, with declamation, "if a felon is returned to Parliament, comes

to this table and claims to be a representative of the people, as long as I am sitting in this place, to call upon the House of Commons to avenge its outraged principles, and say, until either by the favour of the Crown or by your own dutiful conduct you shall have cleared yourself from this flaw, you shall not take your seat in the House of Commons." Some members still resisted, and moved for an adjournment and a select committee, but Mr. Disraeli's motion was agreed to, and a new writ was ordered to be issued for Tipperary. Mitchel was again nominated, and was opposed by a Conservative, who, though outvoted by thousands, claimed the seat. Just then John Mitchel died, March 21st. John Martin, sorely ailing at the time, went to his funeral, and in less than a week was sleeping by his side. Some future Ossian only can sing his death-dirge: O! son of the storm, calm is thy rest under the mossy stone! Thy spear sped in darkness. Thy deeds were not done in the high places of the field. Thy battle-shout was ever in the van of the vanquished. Thou hast passed like a sudden torrent from the mountains that rushes down the rocks and leaves its bed dry. Calm is thy rest, O, son of the storm!

SECTION XI.

On March the 1st the Secretary for Ireland moved what in effect was a continuance of the Peace Preservation Act. Lord Robert Montagu proved, by a comparison of the criminal statistics of the three kingdoms and by newspaper reports, that coercive laws were more needed for England and Scotland than for Ireland. After six weeks' discussion the bill was carried, and the Lords passed it without a division on the 14th of May. The Annual Register tells us that long debates and numerous divisions attended the passage of the bill through committee, that the Irish members were never weary of raising objections, that the leaders manifested much ingenuity and some force of language and argument, and that they persevered in bringing forward amendment after amendment, never seeming to know when they were beaten. One notable incident signalised this occasion. Mr. Butt, on the 22nd of April, asked Mr. Joseph Biggar to speak against time. Speaking against time depends for its character very much on how much time one speaks against. Mr. Biggar was not limited by his leader, and he astonished him and everybody else by speaking against four hours. He resembled a soldier who, coming to his officer with some troublesome request, was ordered to turn right about, quick march. The soldier disappeared, and, when taken up as a deserter in a distant town, pleaded that he got orders to march, and never was ordered to halt. The whole party took to themselves the liberty allowed to Mr. Biggar, and his four hours' speech was the first practical step in the policy known as obstruction.

After these proceedings, it is not easy to comprehend how the Annual Register for 1876 can complain of the posture of morose isolation which the Home Rulers had attempted in 1874 and 1875; or how the *Times* could write that the Home Rulers had been sulking in a corner while they might take part in the great game which was being played around them, and could warn them that their constituencies were seriously dis-

appointed at the results of the policy of isolation, inaction, and impracticability. Immediately after the general election the Home Rule party had resolved, apart from the question of Home Rule, to lay before the House of Commons several schemes of practical legislation, the success of which might fairly be counted on. An inspection of the division lists will show that they did not swerve from this resolution. During the four sessions ending in 1877 more than a hundred Irish measures were rejected by overwhelming purely British votes. The only notice taken of all these efforts was to be charged with morose isolation, and invited to take a hand in the great game, and threatened with the anger of their constituencies. No sooner, however, did they in 1876 begin to take a part in the game than they found that they gave dissatisfaction just in proportion to the skill they displayed. They managed to secure nearly all the evenings of the session allotted to private members. Complaints loud and deep were made as to the good taste, not to mention the Parliamentary correctness, of this manœuvre. Mr. Butt introduced an Irish Land Bill; on May 22nd, and again on August 2nd, a stormy debate arose about the Fenian convicts. Then, on March 2nd and 28th, the municipal franchise was debated; then Mr. Butt brought forward his resolution on Home Rule; the temperance question in Ireland occupied the House on three occasions; an Irish Fisheries Bill and Irish taxation are some of the other topics that contributed mainly to swell the large number of wasted evenings which every session can boast. It evidently behoved a body of members whose constituencies were seriously disappointed at their inaction to devise some method by which their efforts might be directed to a more successful issue.

SECTION XII.

A course of conduct was now adopted by a few of the Irish members that brought out the true character of the long-standing quarrel with England, and traced it to its source in our common nature. The founder of the Christian religion laboured to substitute in the minds of men the desire of essential excellence for the ambition of comparative superiority, social or national. The first is salvation, the second perdition. So long as a man may stand on an artificial elevation by lowering the position of other men, this will be the favourite method of attaining superiority, because it evades all moral endeavour. The favourite and most perverted form this spirit takes is the national one. A nation, to acquire or maintain superiority over other nations, may practice, it is thought, treachery, falsehood, and every species of crime. When the national privilege disintegrates into individual license, the nation is eaten of worms. The Baptist told the Jews, who trusted wholly in their ancestry, that the stones of the field could be turned into such Jews as they were. There is no nation that is so naturally free from this pretentiousness, and that by its sound common sense so thoroughly trusts in the possession of intrinsic qualities, as the English nation. It is thus that it has acquired a real superiority among the nations. But, having acquired this indisputable superiority, the generations that inherit it have been taught to forget the means by which it was achieved, and to rely on the name.

This is the real danger that threatens England, and Ireland unhappily has long been a lure to this danger. It is the policy of English rulers to inculcate a contempt for Irishmen; and as Irishmen are for the most part Englishmen born in Ireland, Englishmen have been taught to despise the very qualities that constitute their own greatness. The real impediment to a right understanding between the two countries is the unconscious but arrogant claim to superiority made by some Englishmen, or more commonly by men of uncertain descent. It is not, and does not pretend to be, superiority of virtue or learning or honour or genius, but simply the superiority of the Englishman over the Irishman. While the Irishman remains in what is called his place he is unrecognised, and so is not insulted or suppressed. But let him stand upright in his manhood amongst a number of Englishmen, and if he chance to out-top any of them, he is instantly made aware that his nationality condemns him to indistinction and subordination. In this gulf of inferiority all the usually recognised marks of excellence are lost. A demeanour supercilious and disdainful when undisputed, threatening and explosive when resisted or ignored, marked the general attitude of the English House of Commons towards its Irish members. O'Connell, in the days of his greatest power, was always treated as an inferior, was never admitted to English society, and was habitually insulted in cold blood. A man of refined feelings would avoid all encounter with this brutal pride; a philosopher would not enter into a vulgar contest for formal precedency; a man of spirit would retire into himself in sensitive disdain. But what was needed was the man and the occasion to confront it, to defy it, and to expose it. If all the constituencies of Ireland had combined to seek a special representative to do this work, they could not have succeeded better than when they sent Mr. Joseph Biggar to Parliament. The man and everything about him forced the contest to its true worth and level. He despised and ignored all claims save those of a man who happened to be an Irishman. He spoke as true sentiments as those of Thersites, but he retorted the blows and sneers of Ulysses. He met pride and assumption with utter unconcern, and when the attempt was made to cry him down he went on as if they had cheered him. Some of his opponents said that he was not a gentleman. He proved that he was by not flinging back the charge. Men of delicate feelings of honour and self-respect rarely call themselves gentlemen, or deny that appellation to others. He who says another man is not a gentleman, and thereby claims to be one himself, shows consciousness where, unless in special circumstances, unconsciousness is indispensable. In the cottage of the English artisan or the hut of an Irish peasant, or the castle of a great nobleman, the natural courtesy that never makes comparisons will oftenest be found. It is not always discovered in the men who are now sent to the House of Commons. A few Irishmen stood up in assertion of their personal rights. It did not come into their minds to say that they were as good and true men as their opponents. They were too natural and too much in earnest, and took too literal a view of their duties as legislators, to enter on any such consideration. It had been for a long time understood that Irish members were expected to take no active part in the transaction of

English business. There was a tradition that they must not intrude in the management of imperial concerns. In 1874 Mr. Ronayne, member for Cork, proposed at a private meeting of the Irish party that the Irish members should intervene actively in English questions, especially in such as affected the interests of the English working man. The proposal was not accepted, as it was feared that it would only prejudice Irish questions. It was now adopted by some of the Irish members, particularly by Mr. Parnell, who had been elected for Meath on the death of John Martin. Mr. Parnell, in respect to family and social position, stood on a level with the best men in the House. His mother was an American, and he was brought up and educated in England. Being born in England does not make one an Englishman, but being educated in England goes far in producing that effect. Mr. Parnell brought English business habits, the stimulus of Irish wrongs, and the spirit of American sovereign independence with him when he entered the House of Commons. He mastered all the details of Parliamentary procedure, and so won a recognition from the country that never failed him in his fiercest encounters with his opponents. He gave himself, with perfect knowledge of his subject, to some of the reforms which are of the very essence of English Liberal progress. Brutal and degrading punishments in the army and in prisons are relics of the benumbing terrorism by which the Normans perpetuate their conquests. In March, 1877, Mr. Parnell, with a few followers, commenced their labours in amending and humanising the Mutiny and Prison Bills. It remains for future times to appreciate their success. The immediate result of their efforts was a storm of indignation from men who identify the ruler with the executioner. Those men, the obstructionists of English growth and human regeneration, resent with especial rage the interference of Irishmen with their characteristic methods of government. When the power of wealth supersedes personal courage and risk, vulgar ribaldry takes the place of the spiked bludgeon. *Quarterly Review* articles have given wide circulation to the perils that threaten the dignity of the House of Commons from the presence of Irish Nationalists. The scenes described change their character according to the object which the reader has in view. If he reads to find Irishmen conducting themselves awkwardly, and expressing themselves without precision or coherence, he will discover what he is in search of; but if he reads to discover a portion of the British Senate goading and torturing a few Irishmen into loss of temper and of presence of mind, it is very probable that he will succeed in carrying away that impression most deeply graven on his memory. A bullbait varies its aspect as we sympathise with the bull or with the dogs. It is only fair to show how those scenes in the House of Commons may appear to an Irish spectator. We have to recollect that the principal person in the following description was treading in the steps of Englishmen whose names will be venerated when every existing empire has passed away. "Scattered over those seats (in the House of Commons) are some hundred members of Parliament, most of them in the regulation 'full dress' of London—white tie, much shirt front, small black waistcoat, black trousers, and black swallow-tail coat. Many of these gentlemen have just come to the House

from dinner parties, at which wine has been flowing pretty freely ; others have looked in on their way home from balls, where copious libations of champagne had been offered up to pleasure. These are boisterous. On the front bench to the right of the Speaker's chair are half a dozen members of the Government, asleep, or pretending to be asleep. In the chair sits the Chairman of Committees, flushed and angry-looking—his face suggestive of a wish to have someone laid under a Nasmyth steam-hammer in full blast. Far down the room, to the left of the chair, stands erect a slim young man, calm, composed, gentlemanly, undemonstrative either in voice or gesture, and he is striving to address the House. The convivial gentlemen converse quite loudly with each other, and in concert, as if of set purpose ; and the voice of the speaker is smothered in the noise. The Chairman does not interfere. The young man persists, and raises his voice above the din, which suddenly grows twice as great as before. The speaker's pale face waxes paler still, and there is an ominously bright sparkle in his brown eyes ; further than this there is no sign that he is moved by the vulgar rudeness which assails him. He pauses, standing still erect. There comes a lull in the designed confusion : and into that lull he interjects a sharp, clear, terse sentence, not at all conveying compliments to the House. Then the hilarious young gentlemen of from thirty-four to forty, who have been out dancing or dining and wining, begin to display the variety of their accomplishments. Three or four, as if to emphasise that frugality of Nature's gifts to them which among their acquaintances causes them to be set down as 'asses,' begin to bray. Others mimic the cries of barnyard fowl with more or less success. Some whistle, as if they were lunatics who fancied themselves railway locomotives giving out a warning ; some ironically shriek 'Yaw-yaw,' which is English for 'Hear, hear ;' others scream 'Vide, 'vide'—English for 'Divide, divide ;' and one, a sprig of nobility"—Here the description becomes scarcely reproducible.

Mr. Parnell's countrymen mistook the nature of the contest. They supposed that he was the aggressor, and that of set purpose he was obstructing the course of Parliamentary business. They supported him by resolutions at public meetings. Mr. Butt, whose ineffectual leadership and uncertain hold on his followers had for some time been a disappointment to the gathering and concentrating energy of his party, compromised himself still further by the line which he adopted. He denounced the new departure. The angry outcry that shocked him tempered the iron of Mr. Parnell's nature into steel. From this time he conquered his enemies by the impassiveness of his defiance and the implacability of his hate. The nation, which since O'Connell's death had been scanning the heavens for a rallying point, gravitated to him as atoms to a centre. He was elected president of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain at the close of 1877. Butt continued nominally to lead the Home Rule party in Parliament till his death, on May 5th, 1879.

Isaac Butt staggered all through his life under the weight of abilities which he was unable to support. His powers were not part of himself, and he was not strong enough to direct them. They did not stand on the pedestal of moral purpose, or personal ambition, or engrossing principle. Had he been a worldly-minded man of the ordinary type, he

could have taken his place by the side of Lyndhurst or Brougham. Other men are prudently vicious; he was weak to imprudence. In court he was stronger than any judge; out of court he was weaker than the prisoner. But the infirmity of his virtue, though it could not resist temptation, gave him an hour of triumph and a place among those whom Ireland will remember with affection. His necessities drove him into the popular ranks, and he stands one of the row who hand on the sacred torch. The men who won place and pension and high social position will be forgotten, while Butt will fill a niche in history.

SECTION XIII.

About this time was passed the Jury Act commonly associated with the name of Lord O'Hagan, "by which," the *Times* says, "the old mode of selection was discarded, packing put an end to, and an imperative system of rotation substituted. No one can doubt that the desire to give confidence to the people in the fairness of every trial fully justified the experiment."

An Irish University Bill was presented by the Government to the House of Lords in 1879, and, after rapidly passing through the usual stages, received the Royal assent. It simply abolished the Queen's University, which it replaced by a new university, differing from the former only in that its degrees were open to all comers. A bill proposing to apply £1,300,000 out of the Irish Church surplus to create a teachers' pension fund was passed on the 12th August. Of two bills brought in by private members—one to permit the formation of volunteer corps in Ireland, the other repealing the Convention Act of 1793, the first passed the Commons, but was thrown out in the Lords by a combination of the Irish peers; the second was made law, but continuing the prohibition of assemblies arrogating to themselves the attributes or functions of Parliament.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LAND LEAGUE.

SECTION I.

SINCE the famine of 1847, the causes that produced it were actively at work preparing a similar catastrophe. The country had slowly recovered itself. There were some good harvests; prices rose, and rents rose in proportion. Then came the old wild competition for land, tenants eagerly out-bidding each other, and undertaking impossible rents. In 1877 and 1878 the crops failed. The loss on the potato crop alone in those two years was about fifteen millions. The farmers made desperate efforts, and discharged their liabilities; 1879 found them heavily in debt to the banks, to the guano agents, to the seedsmen, and overwhelmed by the landlords' claims. The worthlessness of the Land Act of 1870 was made manifest.

Towards the end of April the farmers of West Mayo met in consultation at Irishtown. This meeting was organised by Michael Davitt, and was held on the spot where, six-and-twenty years before, his father had been ejected from his farm, and thrown with his family on the world. In 1870 young Davitt was convicted in London of being an arms' agent for the Fenians, and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude. In 1878 he was released on ticket of leave, and went to America, where he formed the project of combining all classes of Irish Nationalists on the land question. The idea of land nationalisation was at the time making its way in England, and Davitt adopted it as the readiest and most effective method of settling the Irish difficulty for ever by the extirpation of landlordism. Events were driving the country to some similar conclusion. In 1847 the people had starved because they paid their rents. To refuse to pay rents now was the only way to escape starvation, and if no rent was the remedy for the famine this year, no landlordism would be the remedy against famine for ever. If it be said that this would be robbery, then the law that made it robbery must be a bad law. But this conclusion was not come to hastily. "Let the tenant farmers meet together," a speaker said at one of the meetings, "and consult, and settle what would be a fair equitable rent; and if that is not accepted, let them pay none at all." This was moderate language in the face of famine. When Parliament was about to adjourn in May, the Irish members called attention to the perilous state of the country. Mr. Lowther said, in reply, that there was indeed some depression in the agriculture of Ireland, but "he was glad to think that that depression, though undoubted, was neither so prevalent nor so acute as the depression existing in other parts of the United Kingdom." Mr. Parnell went to Ireland, and on the 8th of June appeared, side by side with Davitt, at a meeting at Westport. "It was the duty of the tenants," he said, "to

pay no rents until they got a reduction, and if, being refused a reasonable reduction, they kept a firm grip of their homesteads, no power on earth could prevail against the hundreds of thousands of tenant farmers of that country. Let them have no fear; they would not be exterminated, as in 1847." The memory of the famine haunted the imagination of the people, but they only asked for a reduction of rents.

Mr. Parnell now proposed a convention of 300, and on the 21st of October a meeting was held in Dublin of tenant farmer delegates and friends, when the Irish National Land League was founded, with Mr. Parnell as president, and M. Davitt and J. Brennan as honorary secretaries. One object of the league was to collect funds in America for the purchase of the lands of Ireland for the people of Ireland, and Mr. Parnell was deputed to go to America for this purpose. He arrived in New York on January 2nd, 1880, and was allowed to address the representative assembly at Washington. Meanwhile a meeting was held at Gurteen, county Sligo, on November 2nd, at which Mr. J. B. Killen, a Dublin barrister, Mr. J. W. Daly, proprietor of the *Connaught Telegraph*, and Mr. Michael Davitt, whom Mr. Lowther had described in the House of Commons as a "convict at large on ticket-of-leave," were the chief speakers. Their speeches did not rise above the ordinary level of previous anti-rent invectives. They were arrested on November 19th. A great demonstration had been fixed to be held at Balla, county Mayo, on the following Sunday, in connection with an expected eviction. It was promoted with increased fervour. The eviction did not take place, and the meeting passed off quietly. Mr. J. Brennan made the principal speech. He denounced the system that condemned the toiler to famine and fever, and reminded the policemen of 1847, when one of their force had fired on an unoffending crowd and shot his own mother. Mr. Brennan was arrested, December 5th, for seditious speaking. Those prosecutions were eventually allowed to drop.

A bye-election took place at Liverpool in January, 1880. Lord Ramsay, one of the candidates, announced that he would vote for an inquiry into the claims of the Home Rulers. It was said that Lord Ramsay had thereby forfeited the countenance of the Liberal leaders; but Lord Hartington wrote a letter, in which he declared that, while opposed to Home Rule himself, he did not repudiate the allegiance of those who might consider that demand a fair subject for inquiry. Mr. Sullivan retorted the charge of temporising with Home Rulers on the Conservatives, who had helped the candidature of O'Donovan Rossa in Tipperary. The fact that Colonel King-Harman, the Home Rule member for Sligo, had been appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Sligo county, could not be denied. At a bye-election in Manchester the Liberal and Conservative candidates both made a declaration similar to that of Lord Ramsay.

SECTION II.

Parliament met on February 5th. In the debate on the Address, it transpired that there had been a falling off in the principal crops in Ireland from the yield of the previous year to the value of £10,000,000. The Government, when charged with dilatoriness in providing measures

of relief, could only show that they were more anxious to avoid giving relief to those who did not need it than to succeed in giving it to those who did. Mr. Shaw condemned the "shilly-shallying of the Government, the eternal letter-writing, the eternal going backward and forward," and referred to a case where the guardians had applied to the Local Government Board for permission to give out-door relief, and the permission had been refused. He moved an amendment, expressing regret that the Government had not taken adequate steps to alleviate the distress, and recommending comprehensive legislation for the tenure of land in Ireland. Mr. D. R. Plunkett attacked the Home Rulers, and described a scene which he had witnessed. He saw, he said, a landlord leaving a village which he had visited, followed by tottering men and women, who held up their children in their arms to him, and blessed and prayed for him, and he contrasted him in his mind with the loud-mouthed, swaggering agitator, preceded by a brass band, and followed by a Fenian mob, in America. Tottering men and women blessing their landlord is the scene held up for the admiration of landlords and the imitation of tenants. Mr. Shaw's amendment was lost by 216 votes against 66.

In the passage of a Relief Bill, Mr. Shaw proposed that Boards of Guardians should be allowed to grant relief in money, and to undertake such works as the reclamation of waste lands. Both propositions were rejected. The Lords rejected a clause that modified the rights of landlords in cases of eviction when money borrowed under the Relief Act had been applied to the holding.

SECTION III.

The dissolution of Parliament was unexpectedly announced in both Houses on the 8th of March. Mr. Disraeli, now Lord Beaconsfield, issued a manifesto, in the form of a letter addressed to the Duke of Marlborough, the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. It began by referring to the measures taken for the relief of the impending distress, and then, after an allusion to the care which the Administration had shown for six years for the improvement of Ireland, and their success in solving its difficult educational problems, proceeded as follows :—

"Nevertheless, a danger in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine, and which now engages your excellency's anxious attention, distracts that country. A portion of its population is attempting to sever the constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both.

"It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of this nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its widespread dependencies. The first duty of an English Minister should be to consolidate that co-operation which renders irresistible a community educated, as our own, in an equal love of liberty and law.

"And yet there are some who challenge the expediency of the imperial character of this realm. Having attempted and failed to enfeeble our colonies by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps

now recognise in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish but precipitate their purpose.

"The immediate dissolution of Parliament will afford an opportunity to the nation to decide upon a course which will materially influence its future fortunes and shape its destiny.

"Rarely in this century has there been an occasion more critical. The power of England and the peace of Europe will largely depend on the verdict of the country. Her Majesty's present Ministers have hitherto been enabled to secure that peace, so necessary to the welfare of all civilised countries, and so peculiarly the interest of our own. But this ineffable blessing cannot be obtained by the passive principle of non-interference. Peace rests on the presence, not to say the ascendancy, of England in the councils of Europe. Even at this moment the doubt, supposed to be inseparable from popular election, if it does not diminish, certainly arrests her influence, and is a main reason for not delaying an appeal to the national voice. Whatever may be its consequence to Her Majesty's present advisers, may it return to Westminster a Parliament not unworthy of the power of England, and resolved to maintain it!"

The new Parliament numbered 349 Liberals, 243 Conservatives, and 60 Home Rulers. Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister, Mr. Forster Chief Secretary for Ireland.

On the meeting of Parliament it was announced that Government did not intend to renew the Peace Preservation Act, which would expire in June. This was said to be contrary to the opinion of Mr. Forster. In reply to Irish members, Mr. Gladstone said that the land question, when time permitted, would receive the most serious attention of the Government. Mr. J. P. O'Connor thought that a large and exhaustive measure could be waited for, but circumstances demanded a measure *ad interim*. This Mr. Forster interpreted to mean a bill for the suspension of payment of rent. Mr. O'Connor corrected him—"A bill for the suspension of evictions," which Mr. Forster considered almost the same thing. A bill was afterwards introduced by the Irish members, amending the Land Act of 1870. By that act the courts had no power to award compensation when an evicted tenant owed a year's rent, unless the court was of opinion that the rent had been raised to an exorbitant figure. The object of the bill was to secure compensation in all cases. Mr. Forster admitted that he was not prepared to oppose the principle of the bill. On the 15th of June he announced that the Government, in consequence of the prevailing distress, would propose "to enlarge the discretionary powers of the County Court judge, so that he might under certain circumstances give compensation to tenants in certain districts who were ejected for non-payment of rent." For this purpose he would propose a new clause in the Relief of Distress Bill. This was afterwards found to be an inconvenient course, and the clause was introduced as a separate measure, known as the Irish Compensation for Disturbance Bill. It had a stormy career through the Commons, and was rejected in the Lords on the 3rd of August, after two nights' debate, by the overwhelming majority of 282 to 51. This rejection intensified the Land League agitation in Ireland, and provoked some very strong expressions of opinion concerning the House of Lords, Mr. Forster calling to mind the fact that

the Commons were the representatives of the people, and that the power of the Lords was an accident of birth.

There are claims and powers which, if once discussed, will inevitably be traced to their roots. It depends on those who possess them to prevent the discussion by force, or by using them in subserviency to the public good. In the United Kingdom it cannot be prevented by force, and in Ireland it was not prevented by lenient use. The Land League avowedly agitated for what was known as the three F's, Fixed Tenures, Fair Rents, and Free Sale; but the abolition of landlordism was the golden calf that must at last come out of the fire. Mr. Parnell again and again repeated that it was the business of the league to agitate, not to formulate its demands. There were men for fixed rents, and men for no rents. Between these there was a long interval, and the league had not yet decided where to halt. Time was to tell. This was warning the landlords of the consequences of delay.

On the 25th of September Lord Mount-Morres was shot. He was the poorest and most insignificant of Irish lords or landlords. He was the last man whom the enemies of landlords would think of destroying. He was the very man whom they who chose to impute a crime to the Nationalists would have selected as the victim. A large reward was vainly offered for the discovery of the murderers. More than one hundred landowners and agents met in Dublin and sent a deputation to the Viceroy. A cry for coercion arose in England. But, at the same time, there was a widely-expressed feeling throughout the kingdom that no exceptional coercion should be resorted to without an accompanying amendment of the land laws. For some undefined reason Irish murders no longer affected the English public as they had done. The more modified feeling was especially testified to in the provincial journals. The English people had not been struggling for freedom so long without understanding what freedom means. Ancient nations had fought and died for freedom, and had domestic slaves. But it was a form of domestic slavery that England had long been fighting against, and her cause was that of Ireland. The sense of justice was growing in the English mind. It was in the name of justice they had struggled and were struggling. Do to others as you would be done by was becoming daily an irrepressible inward voice that drowned the blatant falsehoods of faction.

SECTION IV.

The Government were in a difficulty. The national feeling lies deep and exhaustless under all other feelings in the heart of England. Until it was fully identified with justice to Ireland, until England felt that her noblest and safest nationality lay in justice to Ireland, the course of abstract right was not politic. Ordinary expedients would eventually prove themselves to be vain and unsuitable. Opinion must be educated by experience. On October 23rd a determination was come to: C. S. Parnell, J. Dillon, J. G. Biggar, J. D. Sullivan, J. Sexton, Patrick Egan, and seven others were charged with conspiracy to prevent payment of rents and the letting of evicted farms, and creating ill-will between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects. December 28th was fixed

on for the trial. The Land Leaguers pursued their course with added vigour. They served subpoenas on landowners and agents in every part of Ireland, with the view of laying bare the exact condition of the peasantry in their relations with the landlords.

SECTION V.

They now discovered a new power of attack. At a public meeting Mr. Parnell asked what was to be done with a tenant bidding for a farm from which another tenant had been ejected. A voice from the crowd cried, "Shoot him." "No," said Mr. Parnell, "there is a more Christian method, namely, to shun him as a leper." "No one would have expected," says the Annual Register, "the most Celtic of Celtic peoples, and therefore the most subject to blind hysterics and the most incapable of steady combination, to give effect to an advice that demanded for its fulfilment wide organisation and rigid discipline."

Captain Boycott rented a large farm near Lough Mask, and was agent to Lord Erne. The tenants went in a body to him, and offered what they considered a fair rent. He took out ejectment processes against them. On September 22nd the process-server was forced to retire by a hooting mob. The next day Captain Boycott was left without a servant or a farm labourer. The local shopkeepers would not deal with him, his blacksmith and even his laundress would not work for him. Fifty men brought from the North saved his crops, guarded by 7,000 soldiers and policemen. Secret efforts, whose origin can only be suspected, were made to rouse the people against the invasion of Orangemen, but they were received with ostentatious indifference. Some boys and girls laughed at them. Captain Boycott left with them when their work was accomplished, and went to London. The Land Leaguers saw at once the value of the weapon that had suddenly grown in their hands. The boycotting of obnoxious individuals was now the burthen of their exhortations. They held local courts, at which they tried persons charged with paying unfair rents, and if they were found guilty they were boycotted. Even a priest who had the audacity to pay his rent was at once mulcted of his dues by order of the executive of the local branch of the league. One of their first proceedings after this power was organised was to issue an address, disclaiming all connection with outrages, strongly deprecating them, and warning the people of Ireland that violence in any shape might defeat the ends of the league by giving an excuse for coercion. "At no period of the league's existence," the address ran, "was it so absolutely necessary for the tenant farmers and labourers throughout the length and breadth of the country to keep a firm grip upon, and control over, their passions and indignation at wrongs perpetrated and injustice threatened than at the present hour. The evil system which has so long been the curse of their families and existence is now gasping out its criminal life in face of the whole world—dethroned, discredited, and on the point of being destroyed by the stern but passionless action of a united and indignant people through the means of a bloodless revolution. To consummate its death should be the effort of every member of the league; to have the civilised world bend back its

thumbs and give sanction to that decree against landlordism should be the aim and desire of every man upon whom it has inflicted injuries. How is this to be effected? By showing the world that the just use of organised strength is to remedy the present evils, and not to avenge past wrongs; to convince our enemies that we have at last learnt how to evolve out of ourselves, build up, and control a power which can be directed by judgment and reason in the practical amelioration of our wrongs and grievances, instead of allowing it to fall a prey to that intoxication of purpose and unsystematic action which have hitherto purchased the defeat of the people's cause. To effect this object there should be no action but such as the league points out in its teachings and rules—a firm and determined attitude in making just demands; without violence, to enforce what intelligent, legal, and resolute combination can obtain; enunciation of just principles and motives where intimidation entails a conflict with law. Arguments and motives based upon right and the common good, when born of deep and honest conviction, will be found a more potent agency in furthering the cause of free land, and helping the league in winning it for the people, than means which jar upon the public and tend to alienate the sympathy of outside observers. Threatening letters are as unnecessary as they are stupidly criminal and unjustifiable; and we feel assured that no member of our organisation has resorted to a method of making just demands which invites the stigma of cowardice, and clumsily plays into the hands of the landlords."

The league, prompted by the invasion from the north, sent a manifesto to Ulster, showing that the present contest was one between tenants on the one side and landlords, Catholic and Protestant, on the other; and asking for help and sympathy. This appeal, followed up by meetings in various parts of Ulster, partially succeeded. Orangeism, intractable and incorrigible in its blind hatred, resisted. The Conservative leaders in England acted their consistent part in keeping the excitement and the demands of the Land League at their greatest height. They indulged in wholesale denunciation and reckless invective. Sir S. Northcote ridiculed the three F's as equivalent to fraud, force, and folly. In July, 1880, very full reports were published in successive numbers of some of the Manchester newspapers of Fenian meetings, said to have been held in Manchester. Those reports were absolutely and wholly fictitious; no such meetings whatever had been held. Lord Salisbury said there were two governments in Ireland, as if this were a new and portentous phenomenon. Ireland has continued to exist during centuries by the spontaneous growth of successive provisional national governments, but she claims in this respect no exceptional privilege. Every nation and every individual that aspires to be free lives under two governments. "Give to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, and to God what belongs to God," said Christ. The man or nation that gives all to Cæsar is in the last extremity of slavery.

In the *Nineteenth Century* for December, 1886, an article by the Honourable Mr. Justice Stephens has appeared on boycotting. He lays the following foundation for his conclusions:—

"The distinctive special characteristic of all law and government is force—coercion in some one of its shapes. It is this which draws the

line between law and advice, between government and speculative discussion. It is because nations have no common superior that international law, commonly so-called, is not really law at all, but merely a form of morality. It is for a similar reason that questions arising within a nation must, if they involve the question of sovereignty, be settled, not by argument, but by a civil war, or by a compromise guaranteed by the fear of civil war. The question, for instance, whether each particular State of the Union was sovereign, or whether the United States was a sovereign State, was one which depended, not on any argument about the proper construction of the constitution, but on the power which the States individually and the United States collectively actually possessed over the feelings and imaginations of the individual citizens.

" . . . There can be but one government using the temporal political sanction in one nation. If there were two, the more powerful will drive out and destroy the less powerful, as certainly as bad coin will, if allowed to circulate, drive out of circulation all coin more valuable than itself. . . .

"(Boycotting) might be made a frightful instrument of religious and moral persecution. I can imagine ways in which different 'armies,' 'leagues,' and the like might, by the use of zeal about morals, religion, and irreligion, which devours so many people in these days, make themselves an intolerable nuisance to wide circles of people. . . . In part of Ireland it has enabled a small number of ruffians, by the help of a moderate number of outrages, to paralyse the law of the land, and to erect a government which confronts and defies the lawful Government."

I do not quote these sentences for the purpose of refuting them and defending boycotting. The practice so-called is the only remedy of the poor against the rich and privileged, and the most common and most effective weapon of attack by the latter against the former. The passages quoted are self-refuting and self-condemning. To me they are constitutional blasphemies. I quote them to show the perils that threaten British liberties from the foes of Ireland. If force be the special characteristic of government, the nihilist and the dynamiter are the most legitimate sovereigns. The divine right of kings was a million times better than this teaching. If I strive to refute it I must go back to the studies of my boyhood. The government, or the law, puts a condemned man to death not because it has power to do it, but because it is just to do it. Justice, therefore, is the special characteristic of law. No law claims obedience on the ground that it is strong. It falls back on the principle that law *ought* to be obeyed. No English Government puts a man to death because, in its opinion, it is just. The country must pronounce that it is just. The Sovereign reigns, and armies and navies are supported, that twelve men may determine on every question that affects the life or property of individuals, and juries are sole judges of facts and of law. Mr. Justice Stephens may class those principles with "zeal about morals and religion." But in all these matters, also, the people of England are the judges.

SECTION VI.

When the time of the trials drew near, there was a difficulty about the formation of a jury. The Castle influence was drowned in the popular tide. The jurors preferred fine and imprisonment to the peculiar form which the popular resentment had taken, and kept away. The panel was reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four by striking off on each side in the Crown office, and only eighteen were in attendance at the opening of the trial. Of these, three were excused on the ground of age and infirmity, one was exempted as a servant of the Crown, and two were challenged by the counsel for the defence. Thus the exact number was left, and the trial proceeded. It lasted for nineteen days, and ended in a disagreement of the jury—ten being for acquittal, two for conviction. Before the trial concluded, its interest had been transferred to St. Stephen's. The public mind was occupied with two questions—the land laws and coercion. The measure of 1870 had not answered expectations. With the landlords this argued unsuitableness, with others insufficiency. The former demanded a return to freedom of contract, confounding freedom of contract with free trade; others advocated free sale in land. The demand for coercion before remedy carries in general the dispute back to the consideration whether the country or the sovereign rules. In the case of England and Ireland, it is the assertion that England rules; but since it is to be followed by a concession to popular agitation, the assertion is only a form. In reality, coercion is the vindictiveness of an extreme party, morally cancelling concession and perpetuating conquest.

SECTION VII.

Parliament opened on January 2nd, 1881. In the Queen's Speech additional powers for the vindication of law were asked for, and the further development of the Land Law of 1870 recommended. A measure for the establishment of County Government in Ireland, founded on representative principles, and framed with a double aim of confirming popular control over expenditure and extending the formation of habits of local self-government, was promised. Lord Beaconsfield in the House of Lords lamented that the condition of Ireland was no longer a mere English question—Europe knew it, Asia knew it. His unavowed conclusion was that England should show the world an instance of her power. But it is not her power chiefly that modern England desires to show on the mind of mankind. The Duke of Abercorn, a former Viceroy, advised vindication of law, and then a land measure not of fear. We must ever bear in mind that in all cases are the measure and the outcome of liberalism in England. Fear of Ireland is wholly beside

Commons, Mr. Forster immediately gave notice of a Protection of Life and Property in Ireland, and announced that a measure had been framed to amend the law which had been found quite inoperative in reducing tithe rents, in protecting the tenant's interest in his

occupancy, and in creating a peasant proprietary. A bill of coercion following such an admission was in every conceivable sense and degree unjustifiable. The debate on the Address lasted eleven nights. In the course of it Mr. Parnell stated the substance of the controversy. If the landlords, he said, would make common lot with the people, there would be no longer a motive for retaining the present form of English rule, and England and Ireland would become legislatively independent under the Crown. After a proposal had been made in the House of Lords that a Bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act should be proceeded upon after a single reading in each House, trusting to a bill of indemnity, Mr. Forster introduced his remedy in the Commons. It gave the Viceroy the power of arbitrary arrest and detention without trial until after September 30th, 1882. An amendment was moved postponing coercion to remedial legislation. Mr. Dillon declared that if the proposed bill were carried, 10,000 Irish families would be cast on the roadside homeless and hopeless. He protested against the whole force of England being used to support one small class of Irishmen against nine-tenths of the nation. On the second day of the debate, Mr. Gladstone asked for the consent of the House to the postponement of all business in favour of the Coercion Bill. After sitting twenty-two hours, in the course of which Mr. Biggar was suspended, Mr. Gladstone's proposal was carried by two hundred and fifty-one to thirty-three. On the next evening Mr. Labouchere justified the conduct of the Irish members, and said that if the relations between England and Ireland were reversed an English minority would take the same course. Mr. Bright supported the bill because a land bill was promised. This meant that the land bill must be accompanied by an assertion of mastery. On Monday, January 31st, a sitting, which was continued for forty-one hours, was commenced. At nine o'clock on Wednesday morning the Speaker arbitrarily declared the debate closed, and proceeded to put the question to the House. The Home Rulers stood up, and with raised hands, crying "Privilege," bowed to the chair, and retired. For the amendment, there were nineteen votes against one hundred and sixty-four. Mr. Gladstone gave notice of a resolution disallowing debate when a motion for urgency had been carried. After three hours' adjournment, the House re-assembled on February 2nd. Mr. Labouchere asked whether the Speaker, in bringing the debate to a sudden close that morning, had acted under any standing order of the House. The Speaker answered that he acted on his own responsibility. Mr. Parnell proposed a resolution, that the action of the Speaker was a breach of privilege. The Speaker replied that such a resolution must be brought forward by a notice of motion. Mr. Parnell pleaded that he had a precedent for the line he proposed to follow, but he was ruled out of order, and not allowed to proceed. The Speaker now motioned to Mr. Gladstone to move his resolution; but Mr. A. M. Sullivan arose, and, having moved that the House disagreed with the ruling of the Speaker, compelled the Speaker to admit that he was not able to answer the question whether the ruling of the chair had ever been challenged on the instant, without searching for precedents. On this admission, in order to give time to search for precedents, he moved the adjournment of the House, and the remainder of the day was consumed in the debate that

ensued. The House met on Thursday, February 3rd, and news came that M. Davitt had been arrested that same day in Dublin. The Home Secretary was asked whether this intelligence was correct. He answered in the affirmative, adding that Davitt's conduct as a Land Leaguer was not compatible with his ticket-of-leave, but declined to explain what conditions he had violated. Mr. Gladstone now rose to introduce his rule of urgency, whereon Mr. Dillon interrupted him on a point of order, and, when he persisted in addressing the House, was named by the Speaker, his suspension moved and carried by three hundred and ninety-five to thirty-three. He declined to withdraw until five messengers appeared, when he walked out of the House. Mr. Gladstone attempted to resume his speech, when Mr. Parnell moved that Mr. Gladstone be no longer heard, and repeated his motion after warning from the Speaker. He was then named and suspended. Mr. Finnigan took the same course, and met the same fate. Twenty-eight members were then suspended together for refusing to take share in the division. Each in turn refused to leave till compelled by superior force. A fourth and fifth time Mr. Gladstone attempted to speak, and was interrupted successively by Mr. O'Kelly and Mr. O'Donnell, who were suspended and removed. Mr. Molloy, Mr. R. Power, and Mr. O'Shaughnessy were subsequently suspended for declining to take part in the division. The moral and material victory lay with the Irish members in all those apparently humiliating defeats. Whether they intended it or not, the more they forced the cause of Ireland before the public the more did its intrinsic merits become visible to English Liberals, and win not merely pardon but strong approval for them. Mr. Gladstone's resolution was now carried. The state of public business was declared urgent, and the House met on February 4th under the new rule. The progress of business was still slow, and fresh powers were conferred on the Speaker. The bill was read a third time on March 2nd.

During the recess (August 28) great meetings were addressed by the political leaders throughout the country. In Leeds, Mr. Gladstone drew a comparison between O'Connell and Mr. Parnell. The former, he said, took every instalment he could get, sought friendship with England, and disclaimed bloodshed; in each particular the latter took an opposite course. To give any point to this contrast it should be shown that O'Connell succeeded and that Mr. Parnell failed. O'Connell was detested by ruling Englishmen—perpetually called a blackguard, and foully prosecuted and imprisoned for legitimately agitating the repeal of an Act of Parliament. Taught by his example, Mr. Parnell took the only course that has ever succeeded against the Norman spirit in England—direct, defiant, inflexible resistance. It may be more truly said that the nation took this attitude in the person of Mr. Parnell. It is told of Mr. Parnell that once in his nursery days he conducted a warfare with Lilliputian soldiers against a similar array led by one of his sisters. At the end of the conflict all the young lady's soldiers were prostrated, while those of her brother stood their ground to a man. Before the battle began he had taken the precaution to glue them to the floor. Irish Nationalists, taught by bitter experience, had within themselves the qualifications to stand by a steadfast leader when they found

him. Lord Salisbury immediately replied to Mr. Gladstone at Newcastle. He brought the old charge against Irish agitators of borrowing their principles from English reformers, exhibiting the depth and fierceness of anti-Saxon hatred that has never ceased to burn in a certain class of English statesmen. No rent and fair rent, he said, were identical, and he proceeded to taunt the Government with having used the Coercion Act only in locking up 150 second-class personages. Almost immediately a Cabinet Council was held and an order issued for the arrest of Mr. Parnell. This was effected October 13th, and a few days after Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. O'Kelly were lodged in prison. The Land League sent out a circular enjoining no rent until Mr. Parnell and his colleagues were unconditionally released. Government, following the path into which it had been driven, replied by formally suppressing the Land League. Then event followed event by almost mechanical reaction, and the passions of men imitated the blind forces of nature. It would only embarrass the narrative to introduce any consideration distinguishing law from crime. We have only always to remember that the Coercion Act and its kindred subsequent operations were yielded to the Tory requirements of the kingdom. The country retorted on the Government by multiplied disturbances. Outrages continued with undiminished frequency, and the perpetrators habitually escaped detection. The cry of no rent grew louder. The secret societies had been involuntarily suspended by the open action of the Land Leaguers. Their fires now burned underground. Two bailiffs, named Huddy, and an informer were killed. The freedom of the city was conferred on Mr. Parnell by the corporations of Dublin and other cities. A bye-election took place, and M. Davitt was returned. Mr. Clifford Lloyd now issued a circular, practically authorising the police to shoot anyone they chose. The line had been over-stepped, and the circular had to be withdrawn. There were lengths to which the public opinion of England would not give its sanction. This authorisation of the police to commit wholesale execution was the only course by which the Castle could win. Its withdrawal left the victory with the people. It was seen by all parties that the imprisonment of the Irish leaders was the removal of the only authority the nation respected or obeyed. Mr. Forster's rule was declared universally to be a failure. The release of Mr. Dillon was demanded even by anti-Irish newspapers. A Ladies' Land League was established in Dublin, and some of its members were imprisoned. On May 2nd Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster resigned, and were succeeded by Lord Spencer and Lord F. Cavendish; and Mr. Parnell and his colleagues, including M. Davitt, were released. From whom was the next blow to come? The Land Leaguers had struck, and the counter-blow had been pronounced allowable. England would not permit the police to commit open murder in Ireland. Armed violence was forbidden to the landlords. Norman tactics were disowned. Saxon and Norman principles were at war. The Saxon had delivered the last assault—what course would the Norman take? Secret orders were issued by someone that Mr. Burke, a well-known Castle official, should be assassinated. He happened to be accompanied by Lord F. Cavendish when he was attacked, and both were murdered on Saturday, May 6th, 1882, in Phoenix Park.

SECTION VIII.

Cotemporaneously with this atrocious act, a political accusation was made that bore incontestible marks of coming from the same source. The release of the prisoners and the change of officials were the outcome of English Liberalism, and a revolt from the Tory pressure that had hitherto hampered and neutralised its progress. The cry was raised that the new line of policy was the result of an understanding with the Irish members. Because Mr. Parnell had been in Kilmainham Gaol when this supposed understanding was come to, the story of the Kilmainham Treaty was raised as a fatal charge against the Government. It occurs to no one to ask why there should not be a Kilmainham Treaty. It was assumed by the Tory party that there must be no common ground of action with the Irish members—that they must remain separate and isolated, and never unite in a common policy with the rest of the House of Commons. Such was their idea of the Union. They meant it to be a union of master and slave; they meant Ireland to occupy such a position as that the deed of Phoenix Park should seem natural to it, and be safely imputed to it. The accusation and the assassination were consistent parts of the same scheme. The fact seems to have been that an independent member had volunteered to negotiate between the Government and the prisoners; that conditions were informally stated by the latter; and that Mr. Forster eventually refused to countenance the attempt.

SECTION IX.

The protest of horror that arose from all parts of Ireland, and the tone of calmness and consideration that marked the bulk of English utterances on the occasion of the murder, express the true character of both countries. Among the many inducements to friendship and gratitude which impartial Irishmen may find in the general demeanour of English people towards their country, their calm self-possession and freedom from the anger that might justifiably have broken forth at the Phoenix Park assassinations should ever hold a foremost place. The crime seemed greater than it was or was meant to be, and its accidental enormity must have stunned its instigators; but the people of England reflected rather than felt—they saw under the surface. Some, of course, there were who exulted in the opportunity of venting their bitterness; and there were public speakers here and there, Liberals as well as Conservatives, but not as a rule Englishmen, who stirred the fire with the sword; but the people of England thought, discerned, and were just. The high official and social position of one of the victims distinguished his fate by the honours paid to his memory. A procession of 300 members of the House of Commons, headed by the Duke of Devonshire and Mr. Gladstone, signalled the funeral of Lord F. Cavendish; and stone memorials erected in public places recall the circumstances of his death. What influences those monuments are to have in shaping the relations and destinies of the two countries will depend on the manner in which the history of the time is written and read. Mr. G. O. Trevelyan was appointed the new Chief Secretary.

On the 11th of May, Sir William Harcourt introduced a bill prepared for the emergency. He regarded the act of the preceding Saturday as emanating from the general lawlessness of Ireland, which must be met by the creation of special tribunals. The Viceroy was to be empowered to appoint a Commission of three judges, who would sit without juries, and decide questions of law and fact. The police were to have unlimited power of search. Special powers over the press and public assemblies were to be vested in the Viceroy. Summary punishment in the case of secret societies, assaults, and intimidations were provided for; and inquiries, with compulsory attendance of witnesses, even when the criminals had escaped, were legalised. The act was to last for three years. Everything in the way of general legislation that could have been enacted, had the assassination been traced directly to the Land League or the Home Rule members of Parliament, was boldly adopted. The Government availed itself to the full of the advantage which the projectors of the murder had given them. The outside public did not agree with the professional view of affairs taken by the Ministry. The Irish judges exclaimed against the imposition of such powers in their hands. Even the London press, which had cried out for stern repression, relented, and questioned the prudence of giving such large powers to the Executive.

SECTION X.

How the National party in the House of Commons would comport themselves in this trying crisis was watched with eager interest. That they should feel and express horror at the crime was natural to them as men; that they should not sink before the terror of the shock was expected of them as politicians; that they should not hang their heads or wince, or exhibit the faintest tinge of shame on their country's account, or bate one jot of her just claims, was especially demanded of them as Irishmen. They resolutely resisted the passage of some clauses of the bill. When it was in committee twenty-six of their number were suspended, and at last they left the House in a body. The bill was read a third time, with only five dissentients, all English Liberals. It received the Royal assent on the 12th of July. An Arrears Bill, which after certain payments by the tenants and the State cancelled all remaining arrears, passed in alternate stages with the Crimes Bill, and was finally accepted by the Lords.

SECTION XI.

On the 15th of August the statue of O'Connell, erected near the O'Connell (formerly Carlisle) Bridge, was unveiled; and on the same day an exhibition of Irish manufactures of a purely national character, unsupported by Castle or royal patronage, was opened. The city was filled by enthusiastic crowds, and a procession some miles in length marched through its appointed course. No disturbance or unpleasantness occurred. There was no display of military or constabulary force.

The next day the freedom of the city was conferred on Mr. Dillon and Mr. Parnell in the City Hall. A shadow was thrown on the triumph of the occasion by the intelligence that Judge Lawson had fined and

imprisoned Mr. Gray, the High Sheriff, and proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal*, for having allowed the appearance in his paper of a letter written by Mr. W. O'Brien, the editor of *United Ireland*, charging the jury engaged on a trial for a capital crime with drunkenness. A public subscription paid the fine; and the judge, who it appeared acted within his powers, exercised them by shortening the term of imprisonment.

The year was remarkable for a strike among the Irish constabulary for increased pay. The Inspector-General, who identified his contentment with his own pay, with loyalty described this movement as disloyal. He was forced to apologise, and the police returned to their duty. On the 17th of August a very shocking wholesale murder, for which three men were hanged, was committed at Maamtrasna. The object was supposed to be to get rid of the witnesses of the murder of the Huddys. It was not found necessary in any case to abandon the ordinary trial by jury.

On October 17th the Irish National League was formed, and took the place of the Land League. This body contained within its fold the followers of Mr. Parnell, who made peasant proprietorship the basis of his demands, and those of Mr. Davitt, who enthusiastically advocated, as a rival policy, the nationalisation of land. A consequent split in the National party was anticipated, but the imprisonment, in the beginning of 1883, of Mr. Davitt and Mr. Healy, on their refusal to find securities for their good behaviour, in a prosecution instituted against them for violent speeches, turned the attention of the two sections of the league from their differences to the necessity of union. Mr. W. O'Brien was prosecuted for an article in *United Ireland* on the murder case, in connection with which Mr. Gray was imprisoned. His jury disagreed, but the constituency of Mallow, for which borough he was at the time a candidate, was made unanimous by his prosecution, and he was returned by a large majority. Mr. Healy, after serving four out of the six months' imprisonment which he incurred, was liberated. On the 2nd of July he was elected member for Monaghan, one of the strongholds of Ulster. The Orange party were exasperated by this successful intrusion into the north. They organised opposition meetings wherever Nationalist meetings were about to be held, and breaches of the peace, apparently the object sought, were prevented by the effective presence of military and constabulary. Sir Stafford Northcote chose this time to make a political crusade in Ulster against the Irish policy of the Government. His words, in comparison with the accustomed Orange oratory, were oil, but they were oil poured on fire. When rival meetings were to be held at the same time, Government adopted the plan of proclaiming both. Lord Rossmore distinguished himself by his defiance of the law, and he was removed from the Commission of the Peace. The English press was unanimous in its condemnation of the Orange leaders.

SECTION XII.

The reports of two Land Commissions were now opportunely published, and on the 7th of April Mr. Gladstone introduced his Land Bill, and in accordance with their joint recommendation made the

institution of a Land Court, which would deal with the differences of landlord and tenant, its cardinal feature. This tribunal, when appealed to, was to fix the rent, subject to the payment of which the tenant would enjoy practically continuity of tenure and the right to sell his goodwill. On the day after the Duke of Argyll withdrew from the Cabinet. The bill became law on the 22nd of August, 1881. Though this measure might be characterised as one that, by correcting the mismanagement and checking the caprices of landlords, fixed, averaged, and perpetuated the burthen of land ownership, it would have been gratefully accepted as final if it had been unaccompanied by coercion.

SECTION XIII.

It is frequently asked by Englishmen why Ireland is still discontented, seeing that she enjoys greater immunities than England. Supposing this were true, it would be the old story of the large cake and the curse. Whatever England has she has as a right, as the inalienable possession of a sovereign people. Whatever Ireland gets is accompanied with a fresh manacle and a fresh lash of the planter's whip. Ireland is never granted a measure of relief or redress without being told at the same time that it might be withheld or withdrawn, and that England possesses the absolute power and authority to inflict on Ireland any wrong or outrage that she pleases. She relies on the natural pride and confidence which a people have in their Government. She periodically exercises this claim. The execution in Manchester of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien is an instance. While England asserts this right over Ireland, there will always be found Englishmen ready to inflict similar outrages on individual Irishmen, relying on the same national support.

O'Connell strove to make his countrymen the political and social equals of Englishmen. The Young Irelanders contemplated winning greater liberties for themselves and their class by the aid of the peasantry. Mr. Parnell and his party, on the other hand, used the strength of their class for the relief of the peasantry. But when this relief was won they themselves, and the great middle-class body of the nation, remained serfs—slighted, insulted, wronged. Mr. Forster had just described the District Land League leaders as dissolute ruffians. Englishmen identify Government authority with the person of the Queen and the grandeur of her court. As the distance from that court increases the policeman gradually grows in authority. As Ireland is the farthest point of the empire from that court, the policeman there is supreme. The country has long been and is in the hands of the police. Every Irishman may be said to walk upon his native soil handcuffed to a policeman. In the field where he labours, in the chapel where he prays, at his hearth, and in his bed, there is always a policeman by his side. Ireland is like a condemned cell, whose inmate is closely watched by policemen until the hour of his execution arrives. There is only one escape from this fate, and that is by becoming the agent of the police. There is scarcely a man of the humbler classes, there is scarcely a man of any class in England, Ireland, or America, who is not potentially an ally or a victim of the police.

Let no Irishman ever inveigh against English tyranny or English bad faith. Let every Irishman, to whom the honour of his country is dear, store his indignation and reserve his maledictions for Irish treachery to Ireland and Irishmen. An Irishman abandons his country and betrays his compatriots so readily that a bribe seems rather a pretext than a motive. He is as enthusiastic in his betrayal of his country as an Englishman is in his fidelity to his. There is no hope for Ireland until this fire of hell is extinguished. Liberty would only ventilate it; prosperity would only give it fuel. It can only be extinguished by letting the light of heaven shine upon it. In 1877 the Manchester branch of the Home Rule Association was in effect a branch of the detective service. Its President had denounced the crimes of the police, and they were making every effort to destroy him. The resources of the branch were at their disposal through the agency of an organiser of the association. In April, 1877, the president of the branch was summoned to give evidence before the House of Commons. It was known that he would bring serious charges against the Manchester police. On the eve of his departure he received the following notice from the secretary of the branch: "38, Garden Street, Ardwick, April 30th. Revd. Sir,—There will be a meeting to-night in the Star Hotel, at eight o'clock, for a special purpose. I hope you can make it convenient to attend.—Yours respectfully, J. BRISLANE." This was merely a pretence to prevent him from going to London. No such meeting was held, and no other person received a copy of the pretended circular.

Must the genesis of Irish freedom begin with a fratricide? And if those things are done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry? If men will prostitute the small parliamentary influence, given them by trusting constituencies for very different purposes, to the lowest bidder in order to carry out a nefarious police plot against a friend, what will they do when their enemies are in their power and they have a parliament to sell?

And O, men of England, toilers and thinkers whom I love, not with the blindness of instinct, but with the choice of reason, and the habit of comradeship and the sympathy of common aims, and the association of battles lost and won together—my more than brothers, do not suppose that these outrages can be committed against Irishmen without their reacting on your own dearest rights. Let the following extract from the *Manchester Guardian* of May 8th, 1886, be taken as a warning:—

"The unemployed made another demonstration yesterday. A meeting was held in the morning at Pomona Gardens, and subsequently there was a procession through the streets, which ended in eight members of the procession being taken into custody for begging and causing an obstruction. The attendance at the meeting was very large. One of the speakers thought the number was about 5,000; others in the meeting said 6,000, and an estimate was given as high as 10,000. Probably the number did not exceed 3,000. The bulk of those present had the look of decent working men. The chair was taken by the Rev. W. A. O'Connor, who has consented to act as treasurer for any fund which may be raised. Mr. O'Connor said he took the chair merely as a local matter, in order that the meeting might be addressed by those

who were better acquainted than he with the circumstances, though no one sympathised more with the sufferings of the unemployed. He did not wish to create in their minds a single feeling of ill-will towards any class, but there was no doubt that rich men, able to satisfy every desire to the full, could scarcely sympathise with men who had real wants. (Applause.) However long the agitation might continue, he hoped the principles of fair-play and honest English justice would always be observed by them. Of course there was a great disinclination to admit that there was any real distress at all in Manchester. If the governing authorities were to admit that there was distress, it would argue that there was something rotten in the condition of society, and rather than admit that they would leave the unemployed to suffer and perhaps die of starvation. The authorities wanted things to go on exactly as they were. But that must not be. There was great need of a revolution—a peaceful, quiet revolution. They did not want to make all the poor men rich, and all the rich men poor; what they wanted was to bring about some kind of equality, that there would be no starving men at all, and that such a thing would not be possible. (Applause.) There was one simple remedy. Let those who were in work work only for a certain number of hours, and go on diminishing that number till there was employment for all. (Applause.) It was useless to talk of emigration. There was no need for emigration; there were resources sufficient in this country to give employment to all, if they were properly utilised. He would like to see a greater determination and unanimity among the working men themselves. When a man got work he seemed to feel himself a member of a different class and to forget his starving brethren. There was another remedy. A voluntary rate for the relief of the unemployed could without much trouble be organised in Manchester. He had no doubt there were thousands of men in Manchester who would be glad to give a shilling a week, a pound a month, or something of that kind to meet the distress. But, for his own part, he would be satisfied with no temporary provision; measures must be taken to prevent the possibility of such distress in the future. (Applause.)

“Mr. Joseph Waddington read a number of letters received by the committee. Mr. W. Birch, jun., wrote: ‘What is the object of your meeting? Is it work? I am sorry to say that work cannot be found for you—I fear not for months; and for some of you, I begin to think that you will never again meet with regular employment in this district. Emigration is the best remedy for many of you, but unfortunately the public do not seem to think so, and the education of society to a new policy is a work of time. With the means at hand, we could have a thousand of you working on your own land in Canada in two months. Millions of acres in England now almost useless would do better for you than Canada, but our foolish class-law hinders us. For the present, therefore, I do not see any prospect of either emigration or employment for many of you.’ Mr. W. H. Houldsworth, M.P., wrote that his presence might perhaps be more readily excused when he said that he had both through the Provident Society and other channels contributed towards the relief of distress during the winter now past, and now that it is past he hopes and expects that employment will be more abundant. Sir James

Fergusson wrote : 'I regret that my duties in Parliament prevent me from being present, but I shall consider with attention and interest such resolutions as may be adopted. I am well aware that much suffering has continued for some time among people who are ordinarily in good employment, and I have contributed to the extent of my means to many undertakings formed for their relief. I fear that we cannot hope for an improved state of trade until the present political uncertainty shall be quieted, as all kinds of enterprise are checked.' Mr. J. C. Fielden wrote : 'I am in hopes that when Parliament can get clear of the Irish question a measure of local government will be passed for this country, and the question of putting labour and work into nearer and better relations during periods of exceptional distress will be one for county authority.'

"A long list was read of members of Parliament and others who had not replied to the circular of the committee.

"Mr. John Thomson moved : 'That this meeting of unemployed men views with alarm the enormous multitudes now out of employment in the large towns throughout the United Kingdom from no fault of their own ; therefore, we call upon Her Majesty's Government to compel the municipal and parochial authorities to open useful public works at fair remunerative wages, thereby saving the honest toilers from the present poor-law relief—namely, half-starvation—and the useless, degrading labour tests now being imposed upon those who desire to live by their labour.' Mr. Thomson complained of the misrepresentation under which, he said, the unemployed had been suffering. He also complained of the treatment they received at the hands of the guardians. It was a burning shame to make a man excavate ground for 6d. a day. The authorities should be compelled, he said, to undertake the construction of artisans' dwellings, and so give employment to those who were starving. In Manchester there were at present 700 joiners out of work. He did not think emigration was a practical remedy. Why should they go abroad to countries they knew nothing of, without a penny in their pockets—to countries, besides, which had unemployed of their own ? Why should the wealthy people of Manchester seek to get rid of a burden they had themselves created ? What were the unemployed to do ? He did not want to see any fighting, but they must appeal to continental powers to come and assist the starving in Manchester. (Prolonged cheers.) That was the last resort. It would let the Manchester merchants see the position they were in, and their goods would be boycotted. (Cheers.) Patriotism could not be expected of starving men to whom their countrymen would give no assistance. Where was the consistency of the Mayor of Manchester (hisses) in attending an emigration meeting when he had all along said there was no unusual distress ? (Hisses.) He challenged the Mayor of Manchester to say whether it was not a fact that donations for the unemployed had been put on his table which he had refused to accept. He was told that £5,000 had been offered to the Mayor of Manchester ; and if that was not the sum, he wanted to know what it was. (Applause.) The Mayor of Manchester had carpeted rooms, feather beds, and fowls on his table, and if he was not content that the working classes of Manchester would bring his house down his head. They would go to work on constitutional lines, and there

were some very funny constitutional lines which would open their eyes if the authorities were not careful. He thought the large meeting justified them in going in procession through the streets, and for his own part he would not be ashamed to go in the procession and beg pennies for the starving poor. (Applause.)

"Mr. Joseph Waddington seconded the resolution. He said he would knock any man down who offered him work as charity. When he laboured he produced wealth, and he demanded a share of it. They had hitherto only claimed their fair share; now they would begin to demand it. He charged certain contractors with using pauper labour at starvation rates. The Mayors of Manchester and Salford had been invited to the meeting, but where were they? Were they at home discussing good dinners while the unemployed were starving? In his opinion one step was imperatively demanded. They must petition the Queen to remove the Mayor of Manchester, and herself open a relief fund. (Prolonged cheering.) There were men in Manchester, he said, who wished to see the working classes commit themselves; but when he went to gaol, if he ever went, it would be for some noble cause. They claimed food, and in the meantime they sank all other aims. If the wealthy classes of Manchester desired peace and quiet, they would give of their abundance to the unemployed. Upon his knees he appealed to them for the last time. He had been asked to support the Home Rule proposals of the Government, but all he would say on that subject was that if they supported Mr. Gladstone now they would arrive all the sooner at a solution of their own problem.

"The resolution was carried with enthusiasm.

"When the speaking was over, those present were asked to form in the hall in order of procession. A considerable number declined to do so, and at once left the hall. The procession was formed, and proceeded along Chester Road into the city. At the city boundary it was met by a force of Manchester constables, part of which marched in front, part in rear, and part in line alongside the procession. At the head of the procession were four men holding out a sheet for money, and behind them were two men with a placard, with the words, "Unemployed men and women of Manchester." Money was occasionally thrown into the sheet by people passing. Arriving at Albert Street, the procession turned out of Deansgate in the direction of Salford. Opposite the police station in Albert Street the procession was stopped, and the police quietly took into the station the four men who were carrying the sheet, the two men who carried the placard, and also Mr. Waddington and Mr. Thomson, who were at the head of the procession encouraging people to contribute to the sheet. In the meantime the men who had been in the procession quietly waited outside the issue of events. The Chief Constable (Mr. Malcolm Wood) decided to make a charge against those taken into custody of begging and causing an obstruction. Their names are: Martin Robinson, 9, Clay Street, Salford; George Booth, 32, Fitzgeorge Street, Collyhurst; John William Cooper, 49, Coupland Street, Greenheys; Matthew Bergin, 23, Frampton Street, Salford; William Taylor, 12, Dean Street, Salford; John Tennay, 12, Reade Street, Oldham Road; John Thomson, and Joseph Waddington. The men were afterwards

liberated on their own bail, and it is likely they will be summoned to the police court this morning."

The following comment is taken from a leader of the *Manchester Guardian* of the following day :—

"We observe with much regret that a number of the men who took part in the procession of the unemployed yesterday were arrested by the police. The exact charge made against them is not very clear. We have our own opinion, which we have not concealed, upon the wisdom of these demonstrations and the soundness of the doctrines put forth by Mr. Waddington and his friends. But at any rate there is nothing criminal in their agitation. There was not apparently the smallest indication of disorder, and the procession can hardly be construed, except by a stretch of terminology, as an act of beggary. Nothing tends so much to arouse sympathy with a cause as persecution ; and so long as the authorities are satisfied of their ability to preserve order they would do well to remain spectators, though vigilant spectators, of demonstrations of this kind. As regards the agitation, we cannot but think that it also is injudicious. The worst of the economical crisis in Manchester is over. This is the testimony of such disinterested helpers of the poor as Mr. William Birch and the gentlemen who have assisted him in his invaluable philanthropic work. The unemployed will only damage their own cause by the habit of crying 'wolf' in season and out of season. But it seems to us a lamentable error of judgment by which Mr. Waddington and his friends are to be placed in the dock. Fortunately there is abundant reason to trust the discretion of the magistrates who will be called upon to deal with this matter."¹

In no part of England but in Manchester, the centre of anti-Irish feeling, could such a thing as this have taken place. A young and very intelligent artisan, speaking of the events a few days after, said : "Had such an outrage on liberty been committed thirty or forty years ago, every street in Manchester would have blazed with indignation meetings. If the present condition of things had come upon us by a sudden shock, we should have shaken it off, but it is the result of a slow, steady, constant pressure ;" and he held out his right hand, palm downwards, lowering it as he spoke, "and all heart and spirit are crushed out of Manchester."

On February 8th, 1886, the following letter from Mr. Froude appeared in the public papers :—

"Onslow Gardens, S.W., February 8, 1886.

"Dear Sir,—Were there nothing in the way of my lecturing at Belfast but the animosity of the Irish Nationalists, I think I could bring myself to consider, perhaps to accept your proposals. But I am too old for such a strong adventure. Such little service as I may yet be able to do must be by writing more than by speaking, and for the present I do not see that it will be of any use for me even to write. I have done what I could, but events have their own logic, and the words of the wisest are but as wind. Events will soon utter their own voice, and the dealing with them will pass from the talkers to the actors. The present state of things is the inevitable consequence of all that has gone

¹ The men were fined the next morning by the magistrate.

before. It will end as the 1641 business ended, or the 1798. The anarchy will grow till it becomes intolerable. John Bull will then put on his boots, and will do as he did before. What may happen in the interval I do not pretend to guess. You in Ulster I hope to see holding your own ground. Stand steady whatever comes. The real England is asleep just now. She will awake before long, and will then know what to do.—
Yours truly, J. A. FROUDE."

In his preface to the "Irish Massacres of 1641-2," by Miss Hickson, Mr. Froude says that until the story of the massacres is admitted or refuted by Ireland there can be no common understanding between the two countries. I now formally undertake to refute it, and to remove this ground of misunderstanding between England and Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MASSACRE OF 1641.

SECTION I.

In the presence of Mr. Froude's representation, we are all bound to inform ourselves distinctly who the persons are against whom the accusation is laid, what the nature of the charge is, and on what grounds it is supported.

Sir John Temple, who was Master of the Rolls in Dublin at the time of the rebellion, and whose work was first published in 1646, leaves us in no uncertainty about the first particular. In his opening sentences he tells us that Ireland immediately on its first conquest was planted with "English colonies," who for the most part became Irish; that therefore in later times it was again supplied with numbers of colonists from England and Scotland, and that the old Irish—that is, the old Irish and the English become Irish—plotted for the extirpation of the newly-arrived British, that is, the English and Scotch. He makes his meaning clearer a few pages after: "There broke out upon the 23rd of October, 1641, a most desperate and formidable rebellion, wherein not only all the mere Irish, but almost all the old English that adhered to the Church of Rome, were totally involved" (p. 25).¹ The plot or rebellion, we thus perceive, is not charged on the mere Irish, but on the Irish and the old English of Ireland, and the persons against whom it was directed were the later English and Scotch colonists, who came to supplant them in the possession of their lands. As we proceed in this history we find that the Irish are said to have acted only a subordinate part in the conception of the plot, and that the English are charged with being its original contrivers. "First it is to be observed," the writer says, "that howsoever Sir Phelim O'Neale, Lord MacGuire, Philip O'Reily, Colonel MacBrian, Hugh MacMahon, and their adherents, chief of the Irish septs in Ulster, and other counties near adjacent, did first appear on the stage, yet this rebellion was neither altogether, nor originally, plotted by them; but most of them had only subordinate notions of it, and they (as well others of the chief nobility and gentry throughout the kingdom) had several parts assigned them to act, at several times, in several places, and did but move according to the first resolutions taken, and such directions as they had received from the first conspirators. I take it to be most probable, after the general plot came to be reduced into form, that as the Lord Gormanstone was one of the first and chief movers in it, so he and the chief lords of the Pale joined together to draw in (as they had done in all former rebellions) the principal septs of the old Irish, to engage themselves, and to appear first in the business" (p. 69). "The great instrument chiefly employed in this work of drawing the mere Irish into a firm combination with the old English was Roger Moore, Esq." (p. 70). "The remonstrance from the principal Irish in

¹ The Edition quoted is published by White, London, 1812.

the county of Cavan, unto the Lords Justices and Council, was framed in the Pale, and brought unto the said Irish by Colonel Plunket, one of their own. And this was in the very beginning of the rebellion, long before any jealousies were entertained by the State of the adherence or conjunction of the old English with the Irish" (*Ibid.*). "The wife of Philip O'Reily, in the county of Cavan, told James Talbot (as he openly related to the Lords Justices at the Council Board) that she wondered very much the lords and gentlemen of the Pale did not rise and join with them in the very beginning of the rebellion, adding these words, or to this effect: 'That if they would have let us alone, and not set us on, we were so well at ease, as we never would have begun this troublesome work'" (p. 71). "And now the lords and gentlemen of the Pale thought it high time to discover themselves and their affection to the cause. They certainly had not only entertained a defection in their thoughts, but were (as the several pre-mentioned examinations testify) the first contrivers and bringers-in of the northern rebels into this execrable plot" (p. 138). From those passages it is evident that the moral guilt of the rebellion of 1641 is charged on the old English in Ireland. But it may be supposed that the actual murders and barbarities that are said to have occurred were unforeseen and unintended by them, and were the proper work of the Irish. A further quotation, from the deposition of Archdeacon Maxwell, will settle this point: "And this deponent further saith: That the degenerate Pale English were most cruel among the British Protestants, being beaten from their own lands: and were never satisfied with their blood, until they had in a manner seen the last drop thereof; affrighting Sir Phelim O'Neale every day with their numbers, and persuading him that whilst they (meaning the Protestants) lived, there would neither be room for them nor safety for him" (p. 116). Those specific statements are echoed by the voice of general history. The English of the Pale, Hume says (vol. vi., p. 442), "Chose Lord Gormanstone their leader, and, joining the old Irish, rivalled them in every act of violence towards the English Protestants."

Hume ventures the opinion that the English of the Pale "were probably not at first in the secret;" but as he refers for his authority to Temple, who says exactly the reverse, we can only regard his words as an instance of ostentatious and reckless partiality. Miss Hickson goes further: "No one has ever believed," she affirms, "that the noblemen and gentlemen of the Pale had any direct share in the massacres of 1641, or even countenanced or approved of them" (vol i., p. 110). This statement, it may be noted, does not relate to the fact of the English having participated in the massacre, but to the belief in their having done so. With the pages of Sir John Temple open under her eyes, the writer asserts that no one ever believed that the English took share in the massacre. This is an attempt at judicial absolutism that cannot be permitted even in the anarchical regions of Irish history. Miss Hickson forgets her part. She frustrates the purpose for which her book was written. The crime of 1641 justified the Act of Settlement and the penal laws. This is the thesis which Mr. Froude labours to establish. But the Act of Settlement and the penal laws bore as heavily on the English Catholics in Ireland as on the Irish. If the former were

innocent, the act and the laws remain so far unjustified ; and Cromwell and his followers stand condemned of iniquity and cruelty unprecedented and unprovoked towards men of their own blood and race.

Let it be understood, then, clearly against whom the accusation of massacre lies. Englishmen and Irishmen stand together in the dock. This is the one matter for fervent congratulation that is to be found in the whole bitter business. In guilt or innocence England and Ireland must remain one and indivisible.

SECTION II.

We now know who the accused parties are ; let us next inquire into the nature of the crime with which they stand charged. Sir John Temple unfolds it in rather misty terms. "Since the rebellion first broke out," he says, "unto the time of the cessation made September 15, 1643, which was not full two years after, above 300,000 British and Protestants were cruelly murdered in cold blood, destroyed some other way, or expelled out of their habitations" (p. 15). This indictment, which would be equally true though only one person had been murdered, is yet so framed as to leave the impression that 300,000 persons perished in the massacre. The matter is put more definitely in the address of the judge on the trial of Lord Muskerry, in 1653, given by Miss Hickson in her second vol., p. 204: "We shall all one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to answer for all done ; and certainly, surely, for this also at that day, my lord, you must answer, and see if you have not in that joining joined with one of the most horrible massacres in the world. I observe two such : 1, The Sicilian Evensong *Anno* 1282, when all the French were cut off by-conspiracy one Easter day at the tolling of the Evensong, which they (the Sicilians) performed without sparing any, for they intended to root out all the French. This was the Sicilian Vespers. The second massacre, that of Paris (St. Bartholomew), was also very notorious, but it and the other were short of this. That of Sicily was to root out the French ; this was to root out the English natives and the Protestant religion. There were but 8,000 killed, only a few that escaped to a fort, who were afterwards starved. But here in a short time above 300,000 British and Protestants murdered or lost in cold blood, so as that the number far exceeds Paris or Sicily," Various lower estimates of the number of the sufferers have been made by later writers. Hume reduced it to 40,000, Miss Hickson to 27,000, others to 8,000 and 4,000.¹ But we have nothing to do with the computations of modern investigators. It was not on their opinion or evidence that Sir Phelim O'Neale was condemned or the Act of Settlement passed. The special definite charges made against the English and Irish Catholics of Ireland, at that disastrous period, was that they massacred 300,000 Protestants in cold blood. This was the charge that justified the Act of Settlement and the penal laws. We may rest quite satisfied that the

¹ Bishop French, who lived at the time of the rebellion, computes the number of deaths at 400. Mr. Froude, in his preface to Miss Hickson's work, says that no denial of the massacre has been made until recently. It is a historical commonplace that the English and Irish confederates repeatedly and ineffectually challenged the chiefs of the opposite party to have an inquiry made, then and there, concerning the murders committed on both sides.

authors of those measures made such an arraignment as was commensurate with their purpose. To diminish their accusation is to impeach their justice.

SECTION III.

The common meaning of the word massacre in its association with the Irish rebellion of 1641 is that stated by the judge on Lord Muskerry's trial. The English and Irish Catholics were supposed to have intended and attempted the destruction of all the Protestants in the island. The terms in which Sir John Temple advances his charge, "murdered or expelled," disallow the application of the word massacre. When a popular rising takes place, and great numbers of a dominant class are dispossessed of their properties and allowed to escape, or sent away, and great numbers also are killed, the rational inference is that dispossession, not massacre, was the intention; and that the killing occurred incidentally in consequence of some degree of resistance to the dispossession. The purpose of a massacre would not be answered if great numbers were permitted to escape, or were merely expelled. Now, great numbers, vast multitudes, of the Protestants were sent away by the English and Irish Catholics in 1641. The history of the time is rife with notices of the fact. England was crowded with refugees. Very many thousands got safely to the Ulster towns. Sir John Temple tells us that "great troops of men, women, and children had passes and convoys assigned to them, and so came on their way." Again, he speaks of the "daily repair to Dublin of multitudes of English that came up in troops." Again: "Sir Charles Coote had a commission for a regiment, which he quickly made up out of the poor stript English who had repaired from divers parts to the town." Now, this was the very result that the designers of a massacre would have anticipated and prevented. Massacres in the true sense of the word were committed by Coote in Wicklow. Whole villages of innocent peasants were exterminated. "Surely," writes Miss Hickson (vol. i., p. 175), "when we take into account the fact that the soldiers were chiefly the English colonists, who had been driven out of Ulster three or four weeks before, under circumstances of dreadful hardship, that many of them had relatives and friends massacred at Portadown and other places, it was only to be expected that they would retaliate." It certainly would have been expected by the plotters of a massacre, that any of their intended victims who escaped would retaliate; but the Irish and English, never conceiving massacre, and intent only on the recovery of their lands, left themselves exposed to future attacks. It is clear that in fact, or intention, there was no massacre committed in 1641 by the English and Irish.

The population of Ireland in 1672 was 1,100,000. Supposing it to have been the same in 1641, and assuming the proportion of Protestants to Catholics to have been two to eleven, the number of Protestants in the whole island would have been 170,000. The real scene of the rebellion was Ulster. Very few murders took place in any other province. But the Protestants were much fewer in Ulster than in the other provinces, and there were over 100,000 Scotch there, none of whom

were attacked by the Irish. When we restrict the theatre of the rebellion to Ulster, and the time to the end of 1641—for after that period the rising became a regular war—we see how small the number of deaths must have been, and how absolutely baseless was the bruited accusation that justified the Act of Settlement.

The spirit of cowardly falsehood and perfidy in which the supposed massacre is said to have been initiated and conducted is exemplified in the charge brought against its most prominent and notorious leader, Sir Phelim O'Neale. "On the evening of October 22nd," Miss Hickson informs us (vol. i., p. 102), "Sir Phelim O'Neale set out to pay an apparently friendly visit to young Lord Caulfield and his mother at Charlemont Castle. He had, as seems usual with him, a train of followers, but all were received hospitably, and a plentiful supper was prepared for them. But in the midst of the entertainment, at a given signal from Sir Phelim; his unsuspecting host, his family, and household were all made close prisoners." Carte ("Life of Ormonde," vol. i., p. 346) says that Sir Phelim "sent Lord Caulfield word that he would come a gossiping to him that day." The version of the story given by the judge who tried Sir Phelim was that Lord Caulfield "invited" him to his house. All agree that Sir Phelim obtained admission into Lord Caulfield's castle under false pretences, partook of his hospitality, and at a given signal murdered some of the household and made others prisoners. On the 10th of February, 1644, Lord Maguire was tried in London for complicity in the rebellion. He was indicted for that he "with the persons named, Philip O'Neale and others, on the 22nd of October, 1641, at Charlemont and other places, being armed and arrayed with a great multitude in a warlike manner, with banners displayed, swords, staves, guns, and other invasive and defensive weapons, did falsely and traitorously prepare, and *levy open, fierce, and bloody war* against the King's Majesty; and the same 22nd of October, seized and surprised the King's fort at Charlemont, and then and there maliciously and traitorously did kill and murder Toby, Lord Caulfield, Francis Davies, and others." Lady Caulfield was one of the witnesses. She testified that "Sir Phelim O'Neale and others came into the castle. They seized upon all, murdered her servants, and those that were alive they bound them and put them in prison." Mrs. Mary Wordrofe was another witness; her evidence was "that he came on Friday night, about 10 or 11 o'clock, to *break into the castle*. I, hearing the noise, asked what was the matter. I went to call some of our gentlemen; when I came in again, they had taken some of our gentlemen and bound them." (See "Cobbett's State Trials," vol. iv., pp. 678-9.) This evidence of two ladies resident in the castle at the time of the attack, one of them the mistress of it, as well as the tenor of the indictment, absolutely contradicts and refutes the elaborate fiction of outraged confidence. There is not a word of truth in the account, now published in a hundred histories, that brands Sir Phelim O'Neale as a perfidious guest. But how did such an account come into existence? Must there not have been some foundation for it? Foundation for it there was and is, the very same as that on which the credibility of the whole story of the massacre rests. There are in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, thirty-two volumes of MS. depositions said to

have been made by the sufferers in the rebellion. These have been declared again and again, by most competent judges, after deliberate examination, to be utterly worthless as evidence. But the description of horrible murders, and the details of unnatural cruelty, affect the mind with loathing and indignation against the alleged perpetrators, quite apart from any consideration of their truthfulness. We all detest the villains of romance. Mr. Froude has always been anxious that those depositions should be treated and given to the world as authentic documents, and under his patronage Miss Hickson has now published a selection from them in two octavo volumes. We find the following passage in the examination of William Skelton, at page 204 of the first of these volumes: "In the meantime, Sir Phelim himself, with his brother, and divers others his kinsmen, under pretence, *as was generally reported*, were gone to Charlemont to make merry with Lady Caulfield, but indeed to surprise the fort of Charlemont, as afterwards appeared." In the same volume, at page 298, Mrs. Jane Beare "saith that she did know Sir Phelim O'Neale several years before the rebellion did break forth, and *she did hear* that the night before it broke forth the said Sir Phelim went to Charlemont to visit the Lady Caulfield and her son the young lord, as he, Sir Phelim pretended, but he used that opportunity to bring in several of his followers, who surprised the said castle and took the young lord prisoner." Such were the idle rumours in which the circumstantial story of Sir Phelim O'Neale's perfidy had its origin. On rumours as idle as these, forming the bulk of the same depositions, has the whole history of the massacre been raised. It is not pleasant to read those depositions. A sensitive and humane mind shrinks from their perusal. Monstrous incidents, impossible, but no less horror-striking, are reiterated with calculated and inevitable effect. Only after careful investigation do we discover that one of them is the boastful pretence of an infuriate Irishman, and that the rest are only echoes. With one of these echoes, unsearchable and inscrutable, Miss Hickson commences her catalogue of crimes, and strikes a note that rings in the imagination of the reader to the end. In a moment of seeming triumph the worst thing the Irishman did was to brag of having done deeds, the endurance of which had been long the conscious token of his bondage. The principal charges against the rebels are founded on their own confessions. The only touch of genuine truth in the hateful story is the relation of their enemies, how they sickened and recoiled at the sight of bloodshed, and how they fled in superstitious affright from some spots desecrated by murder.

The general object of the examinants is to lay a claim for compensation on account of losses incurred in the rebellion. One after another they depose in various forms how they were deprived, robbed, and otherwise despoiled of goods, chattels, and estates, consisting of cows, young beasts, horses, corn, hay, sheep, plate, household stuff, jewels, rings, ready money, debts, &c., worth some specified sum of money. Then the claim is sometimes backed by a charge of murder on the spot; and after this comes almost invariably the hearsay report of a wholesale murder committed somewhere at a distance. The expressions "he heard," "he credibly believed," "he verily believed," "it was commonly reported," "as the general report was," "as the common report went," "was

credibly informed," "he was told by a person whose name he now remembereth not," &c., &c., are scattered profusely through every page. A single specimen will show their general character. "And this examinant saith that she heard it credibly reported that the said Michael Dunn did tell one Thomas Dixon, now of Drogheda, and then of Armagh, that he, the said Michael, and one other whose name this examinant knoweth not, the first winter of the rebellion, at or about the land of Knockcarna aforesaid, did kill and murder twenty-seven of the English and Scots at one time and seventeen at another time. This examinant saith that she knoweth not Coll MacAlexander, but that there are three brothers of that surname, whereof she saw one at Belfast, who had his arm tied in a string, and was called Colkittagh, and he came thither (about the time that General Monroe had the government of Ulster) from the slaughter of the English and Scots about Coleraine. And it was reported to this examinant that he then bragged that he had there killed forty of the English and Scots in one day. But whether this Coll be the same man that is called Coll MacAlexander this examinant knoweth not. And this examinant saith that she can say nothing concerning Cathal O'Quin. But she verily believes that one Mary Symes, of Belfast, wife of one William Symes, of the same, can give better evidence against him than she can" (vol. i., p. 302). This is the kind of evidence on which a large section of the English and Irish races are to be condemned to carry the mark of Cain on their brows for ever.

It is remarkable that in those depositions there is rarely any mention of resistance being made to the spoliation of property that undoubtedly were committed. It is only mentioned when it produced some minor ill-treatment. In one case the rebels called the "deponent a 'base rogue' when he offered to resist them while they were taking his goods away" (vol. i., p. 173). In another case "this deponent saith that she saw the rebels drag Mrs. Flacke out of her house, swearing they would have arms, and when one Art Maguire, her servant, took part with his mistress to defend her from these outrages, the said rebels knocked him down and miserably beat him" (p. 174). When murder is charged, no word is said about resistance. The obvious explanation is that where the resistance was determined, and led to the fatal results, all mention of it is suppressed, so as to make the murder appear cold-blooded and unprovoked.

No one not blinded by the hatreds of race or religion that inspired those depositions would ever think them worthy of the slightest credit, save as manifestations of party feeling. "Critics," Miss Hickson says (vol. i., p. 139), "have pronounced those depositions a 'heap of perjuries,' without having examined them, and educated and clever men like Edmund Burke, who 'to party gave up what was meant for mankind,' and while he declaimed with all the brilliant and insincere eloquence of the Irish orator on the iniquity of the penal laws, took care to hold fast the estate of his Catholic relatives, the Nagles, acquired by his father under a trust lease to evade those laws, have not hesitated to join in the pronouncements of those ignorant critics." Any person, critic or otherwise, who examines them dispassionately will not call them perjuries, but

will see them to be interested and inflamed utterances of that same unconscious intolerance of Irish honour and Irish genius which describes Burke as "educated and clever," an "insincere orator," and a dishonest man. Edmund Burke cannot be treated as a mere Irishman. His name cannot be extinguished by huddling it among the obscurities of national prejudice. England in a right apprehension of the Union, real and formal, claims him as an Englishman, and will regard any slight shown to him as directed against her own honour. The time may not be far distant when she will take upon her to resent any attack on the British, Norman, or Anglo-Irish inhabitants of Ireland as insults to the English race.

It will be a relief to escape from the stifling atmosphere of faction before coming to a conclusion. A single undisputed fact, and a single unsuspected allusion, will throw more light on the rebellion of 1641 than a thousand depositions. Bishop Bedell, a Protestant and an Englishman, lived in Ulster in 1641. He was a virtuous and a tolerant man. The fiercest passions of the Catholics changed into love and reverence the moment they came into contact with him. His house was the unviolated shelter of hundreds of Protestants. He was allowed, though in the hands of the rebels, to practise his religion. When he died his mistrusting friends were instructed to bury him with the rites of his own church. At his funeral the Irish paid every mark of respect that could be bestowed on one of their own highest dignitaries. One of their priests breathed the prayer over his coffin, "May my soul be with that of Bedell." In the life of this bishop, written by his son-in-law, no mention is made of a massacre. In Carte's "Collection of Letters," vol. i., p. 29, is a letter written in 1643 by Captain Byrch, who had just come from Ireland. In it is the following passage: "Thence to Hawarden we came, where our men besieged the castle there, where we stayed three days, in which time we had six men killed, and I cannot honestly conceal from you that three of these *were killed more basely than ever you heard of any killed by the rebels in Ireland*; for while some called them unto them from the top of the walls upon pretence of old acquaintance, and promised them sacredly they should receive no harm by thus approaching, others shot at them and missed not."

To the above quotation from Carte's "Collection of Letters" the following may be added: "He (Colonel Jones) killed more than three hundred soldiers and officers after they had, upon promise of quarter, laid down their arms, and some after they were within the works of the town. This cruelty was not to be exemplified but in Cromwell, who hath at the taking of Drogheda exceeded himself *much more than anything I ever heard of*, in breach of faith and bloody inhumanity." (Extract of letter from the Marquis of Ormonde to the King, dated Kilkenny, Sept. 24, 1649. Carte's "Collection of Letters," vol. ii., p. 402.) "The cruelty exercised there for five days after the town (Drogheda) was taken, would make as many several pictures of inhumanity as are to be found in the 'Book of Martyrs,' or in the relation of Amboyna." (Extract from letter of the Marquis of Ormonde to Lord Byron, dated Kilkenny, 29th Sept., 1649. Carte's "Collection of Letters," vol. ii., p. 412.)

